No. 00477
December 26, 1980

THE THING

First Draft Screenplay

by

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From The Story

WHO GOES THERE

by

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mm #00477

THE THING

CAST

MAC READY - 35. Helicopter pilot. Likes chess. Hates the cold. The pay is good.

GARRY - 46. The station manager. Stiff. Ex-army officer. Wears a handgun.

CHILDS - 33. Six-four. Two-fifty. Black. A mechanic. Can be jolly. But don't mess.

BLAIR - 50. Senior biologist. Edgy. Inquisitive. Overworked.

FUCHS - 25. Sensitive. Intelligent. Unassuming. An assistant biologist.

DR. COPPER - 45. Professional. A decent man. A good doctor.

PALMER - 27. Second string chopper pilot. Crack mechanic. Long hair. Slight sixties acid damage.

NAULS - 22. The cook. Bright. Black. Mischievous. Irreverent. But kindhearted. Roller skates.

NORRIS - 44. Stocky. Rugged looking. A geophysicist. An incipient heart condition.

BENNINGS - 38. A meteorologist.

CLARK - 24. The dog handler. Likes his job.

SANCHEZ - 21. The radio operator.

In the winter of 1981 these men were commissioned by the United States National Science Foundation to gather data concerning the physical and natural sciences on the continent of Antarctica.

THE THING

THE MAIN COMPOUND OF U.S. OUTPOST #31

The interior is a cramped and never ending maze of hallways, passageways and doors which connect the many rooms and compartments within the compound. Sturdy, but prefabricated materials have been used in its construction.

There is a laboratory. An infirmary. A kitchen and mess hall. A communications room and sleeping quarters. Other cubicles are for storage and supplies.

The most spacious area of the building, and the main center of activity, is the Rec Room. Of the many entrance ways to this room can be seen the small work chambers with their sophisticated computers and other scientific equipment.

The below quarter houses the generator and still other compartments for storage.

A long underground tunnel connects the main compound to the dog kennel.

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THE THING

FADE IN

1 A STARRY BLACKNESS 1

From out of the billions, the smallest of specks drives slowly forward. It closes; getting larger; its features becoming more identifiable: a vessel. Flip-flopping; out of control. Its stern roaring with flame. It passes; its blue fire surging onto screen.

"THE THING"

A thundering....

FADE TO

2 A BLIND AND FERAL WHITENESS 2

...Glacial desert...gusts of snow...superimpose:

ANTARCTICA 1982 WINTER

3 A SOUND 3

Loud and strident. A helicopter streaks across frame. It travels precariously close to the ground; its chassis battered and swayed by the wind.

4 INT. COPTER 4

Red dials beam on the faces of two men. One carries a rifle and searches the horizon with binoculars. The other pilots. Their unkempt faces, their blazen eyes notate a wildness. They bark at each other in some Scandinavian tongue. Two men arguing like mad and desperate children.

The man with the binoculars sights something.

5 EXT. HORIZON - BINOCULARS' POINT OF VIEW - A DOG 5

It turns and snarls at the craft some fifteen hundred yards to its rear. Then whirls and gallops off. A gun blast kicks up snow at its heels.

6 INT. COPTER 6

Another blast of rifle fire as the man takes issue with his prey. The pilot slams a fist into his gunman friend and implores for better aim. The craft swoops lower and the engine is put into full throttle.

7 EXT. HILL - THE DOG 7

running feverishly up and over a hill of ice. A weather-beaten, wooden sign sticks up on the other side:
U.S. NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION -- OUTPOST #31.

A rifle blast kicks up more snow.

8 EXT. COMPOUND OF U.S. OUTPOST #31 8

A large, almost snow-covered building. Not far from that a tall, meteorological balloon tower.

A scattering of several small shacks at varying distances from the main compound. The smaller hovels are connected by wooden planked walkways and steadying ropes. Multicolored pennants stick out of the snow marking pathways and directions to outdoor experiments.

A tractor and two helicopters sit idle, covered with mounds of continuously mounting snow.

9 TWO MEN, NORRIS AND BENNINGS 9

standing some thirty yards from the main building are in the process of letting up a large red balloon. Childs, a hefty black man, is twenty yards away tinkering with a snowmobile. Their beards are caked with ice. It is winter and it is harsh.

The faint sound of the copter turns their attention.

10 THE COPTER 10

flying even lower now. The man with the gun leans dangerously outside and fires away at the dog as it nears the outpost.

11 THE MEN 11

outside the compound look to one another, incredulous.

12 THE COPTER 12

much too low now, and chastised by the wind, attempts a high-speed landing, directly on the heels of the sprinting dog. It bounces violently on the hard-packed surface. Once. Twice. Passing the dog.

A third bounce sends it skidding. It flips; its blades snapping off like toothpicks. It lands belly-up, soundless except for the whine of its engine.

The man with the gun rolls out before the explosion.

13 INT. MAIN COMPOUND 13

The half a dozen men, playing cards, monitoring equipment, listening to music -- spring to their feet, startled.

14 EXT. COMPOUND 14

The dog reaches Norris and Bennings, as they awkwardly wade through the snow, toward the downed copter.

15 THE SURVIVOR 15

of the crash, his eyes crazed with determination, struggles to his feet. Heedless of his companion, he double-times his way to the men and the dog. He reloads his gun and bellows in his Scandinavian tongue.

Norris and Bennings have no idea what he is saying.

The survivor waves his arm as if shooing them off, screaming as he does so; his face now caked with blood.

The two men are bewildered. The dog jumps up, licking and pawing them, imploring for safety.

Blam!! The visitor fires. The men jump back in disbelief.

NORRIS
What the fu....

Blam! Blam! The crazed visitor screams and fires as he stalks after them. His countenance ablaze, mad. Ice and snow kick up about the terrified Americans. A bullet smacks into the dog's hip, sending it skidding and howling in pain.

CONTINUED

15 CONTINUED 15

Childs, the black man by the snowmobile, takes cover, diving behind his machine.

Bennings is hit. Norris pulls, drags him back toward the compound. The dog crawls along beside them.

The intruder is relentless in his assail. He runs, screaming, firing, screaming, reloading and firing.

16 INT. COMPOUND 16

Total confusion. Some watch helplessly through the small, fogged-up and translucent windows. Others try to mobilize, grabbing for their heavy jackets.

17 CLOSE ON A .357 MAGNUM 17

as it efficiently breaks through a windowpane and into the cold. A steady hand grips it firmly.

18 THE SCANDINAVIAN 18

getting closer. Kablam! Suddenly, his head jerks back. He falls to his knees and then face down into the snow.

19 NORRIS AND BENNINGS 19

stare blankly, but relievedly at the fallen man. The dog whimpers in pain.

20 CHILDS 20

pokes his head out from under the snowmobile.

21 INT. MAIN COMPOUND - REC ROOM 21

The rumbling of voices fades. The men adjust their eyes to station manager Garry, as he extracts his gun from the broken window, relieves it of its spent shell and puts it away.

CUT TO

22 EXT. BURNING COPTER 22

Several men spray snow on the burning wreckage. There is no hope for the pilot.

CUT TO

23 INT. COMPOUND - CLOSE ON THE PALLID FACE OF THE SCANDINAVIAN INTRUDER 23

A neat round hole is set in the middle of his forehead. Station manager Garry holds up something akin to an ID.

GARRY
Norwegian...Jans Bolen.

Fuchs, a young and sensitive-looking biologist, stands closest to the large area map of Antartica. Several men sit and stand around viewing the body that lies on two brought-together card-tables.

FUCHS
Gotta be from the Norwegian camp.

GARRY
How far's that?

FUCHS
'bout eight kilos southwest.

GARRY
(surprise)
That far?

Garry directs his attention to Norris, the rugged-looking, fortyish, geophysicist, who was one of the men being shot at. Next to him sits Childs, the large black who had been working on the snowmobile.

GARRY
You catch anything he was saying?

NORRIS
Yeah. I caught that he wanted the better part of my ass to come apart.

Garry motions inquiringly to Childs.

CHILDS
Am I starting to look Norwegian to you, Bwana?

24 INT. INFIRMARY 24

Dr. Copper, mid-forties, works on the outstretched leg of Bennings, the meteorologist. Clark, the dog handler, is mending the hip of the wounded dog off in the corner. Bennings lets out with an ouch.

DR. COPPER
Don't 'ouch' me. Two stitches. It just grazed you.

He helps a shaken Bennings up off the table.

BENNINGS
What in the hell were they doing?.. Flying that low...shooting at a dog...at us....

DR. COPPER
Stir crazy. Cabin fever...Who knows.

The dog yelps and whimpers as Clark tries to calm him.

CLARK
I'll be here a while. Shell's pretty deep.

25 INT. RADIO ROOM 25

Blair, senior biologist, fifty, balding, leans against the entrance door.

He looks on as the young, bored-looking radio operator, Sanchez, attends to his equipment. Bursts of static.

SANCHEZ
It's no go.

BLAIR
Well, get to somebody. Anybody. We've got to report this mess.

SANCHEZ
Look, I haven't been able to reach shit in two weeks. Doubt if anybody's talked to anybody on the whole continent.

26 INT. HALLWAY 26

Nauls, the cook, glides along on his roller skates down one of the many narrow hallways that connect the various compartments of the main compound. He is black, a little mischievous, about twenty-two.

He comes to a flashy skidding stop at one of the entrances to the rec room area, where the men are gathered with the dead Norwegian.

NAULS
Maybe we at war with Norway.

Station manager Garry directs a question to Fuchs, who is leafing through a thick file of papers.

GARRY
How long have they been stationed there?

FUCHS
Says here about eight weeks.

Dr. Copper enters the room. Bennings limping after him slightly.

GARRY
(shaking his head)
That's not enough time for guys to go bonkers.

NAULS
Bullshit, Bwana, sweetheart. Five minutes is enough to put a man over down here.

Palmer, a spacy, twenty-seven-year-old, novice pilot and mechanic, agrees, as he lights a joint.

PALMER
Damn straight.

NAULS
I mean Palmer been the way he is since the first day.

Palmer smiles and flips the cook the bird.

GARRY
How many in their party?

CONTINUED

26 CONTINUED 26

FUCHS
(referring)
Started with six. There'd be four others left.

DR. COPPER
How do you know?

The men's attention turns to Copper.

DR. COPPER
(continuing)
...Guys as crazy as that could have done a lot of damage to their own before they got to us.

GARRY
Nothing we can do about that.

DR. COPPER
Yes, there is. I'd like to go up.

GARRY
In this weather?

DR. COPPER
(turns to)
Bennings?

BENNINGS
Winds are going to let up a tad, next couple of hours.

GARRY
A tad?

BENNINGS
Can't condone it much myself. But is it a short haul. Hour there, hour back.

Garry still does not much like the idea. Palmer takes another hit off his joint.

PALMER
Shit, Doc, I'll give you the lift if....

GARRY
Forget it, Palmer. Doc, you're a pain in the ass.

CONTINUED

26 CONTINUED - 2 26

GARRY (Cont'd)
(turns)
Norris, go get MacReady.

Slight laughter from some of the men.

NORRIS
(grins)
MacReady ain't going nowhere.
Bunkered in till spring.

GARRY
Just go get him.

NORRIS
(stands)
Anyway, he's probably ripped.

27 EXT. U.S. OUTPOST #31 27

Norris, bundled in his sixty-five pounds of clothing, exits the main compound. He walks the prefab wooden planks up the precipice; his destination is some one hundred yards up the slope -- to a shack. He grabs onto the steadying ropes and pulls himself against the wind and blowing sleet.

28 INT. MAC READY'S SHACK - CLOSE ON ICE CUBES 28

being dumped into a glass, followed by the pouring of whiskey. An electronic Voice is heard.

VOICE
Bishop to knight four.

MacReady takes a sip of his drink; makes his way over to his electronic chess game. A large Mexican sombrero hangs on his back. He is tall; about thirty-five. His shack is sparse but unkempt. A few centerfolds on the wall are interspersed by an occasional poster of some Mediterranean or South American paradise.

The chess game is of larger than normal size. The pieces move automatically with the press of a button. He sits down and chuckles over his opponent's bad move.

MAC READY
You poor little son of a bitch.
You're starting to lose it, aren't
you?

He confidently taps out his move. His companion's response is immediate.

CONTINUED

28 CONTINUED 28

VOICE
Pawn takes queen at knight four.

MacReady's grin slowly fades as he examines the board. There is a pounding at his door. MacReady broods for a bit, heedless of his visitor and makes his next move.

VOICE
(continuing)
Rook to knight six. Check.

More impatient pounding. MacReady glares at his opponent for a beat. He bends forward, opens up a flap containing the chess game's circuitry and pours in his drink. There ensues a snapping, popping sound as smoke and sparks rise from the machine; followed by a flush of chess gibberish.

MacReady gets up from his seat, mumbling on his way to the door.

MAC READY
...Cheating bastard....

He opens the door. Norris steps in followed by a flurry of snow and wind.

NORRIS
You jerking off or just pissed?

MAC READY
We got any more of those electronic chess things down in supply?

NORRIS
Get your gear on. Let's move.

MAC READY
What for?

NORRIS
You're not going to believe it.

29 EXT. OUTPOST 29

One of the grounded choppers is being readied for take-off. Childs holds a huge industrial torch to the engine, warming it up.

30 INT. MAIN COMPOUND - CORRIDOR 30

Garry, Bennings, Dr. Copper, Palmer and MacReady wind their way through the slender corridors on their way to the chopper. Dr. Copper carries a satchel of medical supplies. MacReady, going over his flight chart, looks mad as hell. Dialogue overlaps.

MAC READY
...Craziness... This is goddamn insane....

GARRY
...Quit the griping MacReady. Sooner you're there -- sooner you're back.

MAC READY
It's against regulations to go up this time of year!

DR. COPPER
Screw regulations! Four guys could be crawling around on their bellies out there!

MAC READY
So, I don't want to end up crawling around with them when we go down.

GARRY
Look, if you're going to keep bitching, MacReady -- Palmer's offered to take him up....

MAC READY
What are you talking?! He's had two months training in those choppers!

PALMER
(defiant)
Four!

MAC READY
(to Bennings)
What is it out there, anyway? Forty-five knots?

BENNINGS
Sixteen.

MAC READY
(disgusted)
And the horse you rode in on . Sixteen for how long?! You can't predict this time of year....

31 INT./EXT. CHOPPER 31

Dr. Copper sits next to MacReady, who is at the controls. MacReady tightens the string of his sombrero around his neck and starts up its choking engine.

MacReady fights violently with the controls as he struggles to get the craft into the air. It finally rights itself and moves up and off into the grey-white sky.

32 INT. MAIN COMPOUND 32

A couple of the men mingle in the area. Clark, the dog handler, looks out the window.

CLARK
Mac's really taking it up, huh?

The dog, a large bandage on his hip, wades through the room. Under tables. Past men's legs. It hobbles slightly. No one takes notice.

CUT TO

33 EXT. THE CHOPPER 33

moves over a ridge of ice. Columns of smoke can be seen rising ominously from a quarter mile off.

34 EXT. CHOPPER - POINT OF VIEW 34

As they near, the smoke looms thicker. A black, tar-like gush; billowing up into the grey sky from the whiteness below.

35 EXT. NORWEGIAN CAMP 35

Smoke climbs upward in the f.g. MacReady sets his craft down. Pull back to reveal the camp itself: resembling the aftermath of a western fort, sacked and ravaged by Indians.

Small fires and debris are strewn everywhere. The prefab Administration Building exposes gaping holes. Smoke rises from the almost entirely snow-buried Quonset huts. Embers swirl in every direction.

36 INT. CHOPPER 36

The two men look at each other in silence. They get out.

37 CLOSE ON A LARGE, MAKESHIFT FUNERAL PYRE 37

smoldering to a close. A hastily conceived crematorium. Wood, books, furniture, tires, anything that will burn has been mixed together with the charred remains of several dogs and the body of a man.

Curious mounds of a melted and blackened goo are heaped within the mess.

A small can of gasoline lies nearby. A large oil drum not far off.

38 MAC READY AND COPPER 38

their faces ashen as they take in this grotesque sight. MacReady turns to view the Norwegian compound. He then exchanges a look with Copper. MacReady heads back toward the chopper.

39 THE CHOPPER 39

MacReady unhinges the shotgun that is latched to the panel behind the seats.

40 EXT. THE MAIN BUILDING - THE DOOR 40

MacReady and Dr. Copper stand hesitantly amidst the wisps of snow and embers. MacReady tries the door. It is unlocked. He slowly pushes it open with his gun. A creaking. A long pitch-black corridor. Copper shines a flashlight.

DR. COPPER
Anybody there!?

No answer. Just wind. They exchange a look and enter.

41 INT. NARROW CORRIDOR 41

The two men move slowly. It is dank and cold. Their breath, bleating like exhaust. A soft, steady wind howls overhead. The flashlight is not much help.

Further down, they hear a faint hissing sound. As they get closer it more resembles static. The flashlight finds a door at the end of the corridor. The sputtering static comes from within.

CONTINUED

41 CONTINUED 41

The face of the door has been shredded. An ax sticks out from its middle. MacReady wrenches out the ax. There is blood on it. The men acknowledge this for a beat. MacReady tries the knob. It opens slightly. Something is blocking it from the other side.

MAC READY
Anybody in there?!

Nothing.

DR. COPPER
We're Americans!

Nothing.

MAC READY
Come to help you!!

MacReady pushes against the door.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Give me a hand.

They push, shove, grunt. The door gives a bit. Finally more. It widens enough for MacReady to see that a large computer-like machine is blocking their path. MacReady wedges in and shines the flashlight.

It is the communications room. Holes in its roof have allowed in the freezing cold. The flashlight exposes the back of the radio chair. One more nudge allows them into the room.

A beat as they catch their breath. MacReady spots a Coleman lantern. He lights it with a match. Holds it up. The brighter light exposes the top of a man's head sitting in the radio chair.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Hey, Sweden!.. You okay?

The chair rocks slightly with the gentle breeze. They inch closer. A yard from the chair, MacReady stops the Doctor. He pokes his gun at the chair's back.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Sweden!?

CONTINUED

41 CONTINUED - 2 41

Dr. Copper spots something. From the man's wrist on the armrest, he follows a long, yarn-thick, red line, ending in a pool of frozen blood on the floor.

The two men step around the chair. The Norwegian stares up in blanched death. A gaping black hole for a mouth. His throat and wrists slit. An old-fashioned straight razor in his lap.

MacReady turns off the hissing radio, and marches to the other door. It is locked and barricaded.

DR. COPPER
(more to himself)
My God, what in hell happened here?

MAC READY
Come on, Copper.

The two men free a machine-like obstacle from the other exit. MacReady opens lock and pushes the door open. More blackness. Stronger wind. Copper holds the lantern high as they make their way down a row of wooden steps and into a cavernous, underground causeway.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Hey, Sweden!!!

DR. COPPER
(irritated)
They're not Swedish, goddamn it, they're Norwegian, MacRe....

Whap!!!!! Something slaps into the Doctor's face from the darkness. The lantern crashes to the ground. The Doctor stumbles, falls. MacReady grabs the flashlight and whirls in different directions. A panting beat. Silence.

Dr. Copper holds up what hit him. A thick centerfold, buffeted by the wind. MacReady takes it.

MAC READY
Norwegian of the Month, Doc. Harmless.

MacReady pockets it for further viewing.

42 INT. THE NARROWEST OF CORRIDORS 42

The supporting beams have long since buckled and cracked from the constantly moving ice underneath. The evidence of fire has further weakened the foundations. The wood creaks overhead. Bits of ice and silt trickle down.

The two men walk haunched, cautious. MacReady gingerly tries to make his way around a broken and smoldering beam. He brushes it gently sending a shower of debris from the yawning roof.

The two men wait until it subsides and then move on.

Further down. MacReady's knee bumps into something along the wall, causing him to stumble slightly. He shines his light on it.

An arm is sticking out of a steel door about three feet off the ground. The door has been slammed shut. The arm pinned. its fist still gripping a small welding torch. The flame long since gone out.

MAC READY
(wincing)
Holy shit....

He tries the door. Unlocked. It opens. The arm drops to the ground. It had been severed by the force of the slam. Its owner is nowhere to be seen.

MacReady, sickened, coughs. Dr. Copper mumbles.

DR. COPPER
Christ....

They step over the arm and into another slim passageway. Moving along they come to rest in front of a door with Norwegian lettering on it.

MacReady pushes it open with his foot. Dozens of papers fly about, flailed by the holes in the Quonset hut-style roof. The place is a wreck. They enter. MacReady surveying the small room with his flashlight.

DR. COOPER
(continuing)
...Laboratory.

Broken beakers, test tubes, a microscope are illuminated. MacReady notices a video camera.

CONTINUED

42 CONTINUED 42

MAC READY
Portable video unit.

Copper makes his way over to the main work table. He shuffles through papers, glancing at the writing.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Anything?

DR. COPPER
All in Norwegian.

Dr. Copper bends down and begins gathering the papers, strewn about the room.

MAC READY
What are you doing?

DR. COPPER
Could be important work. Might as well bring it back.

MAC READY
It's getting late. Hurry it. I'm going to check the last few rooms.

He exits. Amongst the rubble, Dr. Copper finds a pocket tape recorder and several cassettes. He selects a tape and is about to pop it in when he senses something to his rear. He turns. Looks. A beat. Nothing.

43 INT. HALLWAY 43

MacReady shoves himself into another room.

44 INT. ROOM 44

Debris and wood flush down on him. The receding ceiling had been blocking the door from above. He brushes his coat and shines the light upwards.

The ceiling is a shambles. He then shines the light deeper into the room.

45 INT. NORWEGIAN LAB 45

Dr. Copper is playing the small tape recorder. A casual Norwegian voice drones on as if making notes. He fast forwards. The same casual drone.

MAC READY (o.s.)
Copper, come here!!

46 INT. ROOM 46

Dr. Copper enters, squeezing in, through the door. The wood cracks overhead. More debris comes falling down.

MAC READY
Careful. It's about to go.

Copper dusts himself. MacReady stands before a huge block of ice. Fifteen feet long. Six feet wide. Four feet tall.

It has partially melted, but its thawing process has been stopped by the now freezing temperatures within the outpost.

Its one curious feature: the middle has been thawed and scuppered out. Giving it the appearance of a large bathtub. The two men study it uncomprehendingly.

MacReady's gaze turns to a large metal cabinet at his left. He moves for a closer look. Several photographs are pasted to its door. Small snapshots of the Norwegians at work and play.

He tries to open it. Stuck. The partially caved-in ceiling is slightly blocking the top of the door. He tries again, careful not to dislodge the wood and plaster above. Bits of dust float down.

DR. COPPER
Watch it.

His grip is too strong. It gives suddenly, unexpectedly. The large metal door flies open.

Large chunks splash from the ceiling. They come thumping to the floor, behind and in front of the open cabinet door. MacReady coughs and waves away the dust. He peers inside. Nothing much. Some empty shelves. Some small scientific gear.

His flashlight then locates a large photograph taped to the inside of the cabinet door.

It is a picture of five Norwegians, arm in arm, all smiles, toasting each other. They are on either side of the frozen block of ice, pridefully displaying it for the camera. The block looks much thicker. Its interior opaque.

MacReady looks to the block of ice and then back to the photograph. He untapes it, pockets it and shuts the door.

CONTINUED

46 CONTINUED 46

An armless corpse swings into his face from behind the closing door. Dislodged from the ceiling, the body and MacReady go crashing to the floor.

CUT TO

47 INT. U.S. OUTPOST - RECREATION ROOM 47

The loud beat of Warren Zevon's song, "The Werewolves of London," can be heard throughout the compound. The room is empty. Close on a video pong game, its ball of light lazily traveling back and forth. The dog, its tail wagging, its bandage on, walks by.

48 INT. KITCHEN 48

Zevon's record is blasting from Nauls' stereo. He skates from the big walk-in freezer and plunks down a large side of beef on the wood cutting table to thaw. He skates from pot to pan keeping time with his sounds.

He smells. Tastes. Adds a little something here, a touch there. He clearly enjoys his work.

Station Manager Garry stops past the open door.

GARRY
Turn that crap down, Nauls. You can hear it all over camp!

NAULS
Oui, Bwana. Can do.

He skates over and turns it down, but not much.

GARRY
What are we having tonight?

NAULS
Beef flambe avec oregano e and sauteed in a deep garlic sauce.

GARRY
(wincing)
Did you tell Childs about the garlic?

CONTINUED

48 CONTINUED 48

NAULS
I don't have no time to take no special requests from no SOB. He eats what I cook or he don't eat.

GARRY
He's going to whup you one day.

49 INT. COMMUNICATIONS ROOM 49

Garry enters and sees that Sanchez has nodded off in front of his receiver. His headgear is still on. Garry walks over and turns up the volume, the static jolting Sanchez awake.

SANCHEZ
Hey, man...!

GARRY
You reach anybody yet?

SANCHEZ
We're a thousand miles from anybody else, man. It's going to get a hell of a lot worse before it gets better.

GARRY
Well, stick to it.

50 INT. COMPOUND CORRIDOR 50

An empty hallway. Larger than most. Doors to several sleeping quarters on either side. The dog slowly walks through.

One of the doors is open up ahead to his left. The dog stops in front of it and looks in. Someone is inside.

Inside the small cubicle, a slight portion of a man's back can be seen as he sits bent over a chair; his large shadow displayed on the wall.

Back in the corridor. The dog looks up the hall once and casually to the other end. No one. He enters the room. The sound of a man's voice, too indistinct to tell whose, mumbles a, "Hello boy." A beat.

The sound of a glass breaking. A muffled scuffling. The door is slammed shut from the inside. And then silence.

CUT TO

51 EXT. COMPOUND 51

Fuchs, the young biologist, is finishing up his daily jog around the compound. He stops at the end of a long Quonset hut almost completely buried in the snow. The hut is fifty yards long and connects to the main compound. He enters a tunnel from a latch door up top.

52 INT. TUNNEL 52

He jogs down the steps, passing the underground dog kennel and trots toward the compound through the long narrow tunnel. He passes and waves to Clark, who rolls along a wheelbarrow of dog food.

53 CLARK 53

opens the door to the small kennel and serves up the dinner. The dogs, about seven of them, yelp and bark eagerly.

54 INT. UNDERGROUND PASSAGEWAY 54

near the fuel supply bladders. Older and more rickety than the quarters above.

Childs waltzes through, humming, a big smile on his face. He stops at a door with six locks on it. Different kinds. Combination locks, key locks, etc. He opens each one separately.

55 INT. STORAGE ROOM 55

Inside are several marijuana plants. Sun lamps beam down on them. Childs inspects them with a wide grin.

CHILDS
How my brothers and sisters doing today? Doin' fine.

He moves over to a tape deck, selects a cassette, grins back at the plants and turns it on.

CHILDS
(continuing)
What say to some nice Al Green for my babies, huh?

CONTINUED

55 CONTINUED 55

He waters them carefully, as Al Green sings softly. He hears a panting and turns around to see the dog. His bandage is gone.

CHILDS
(continuing)
What you?...You get hell on out of here.

The dog is shooed off. Childs turns back grumbling.

CHILDS
(continuing)
...Comin' in here...goin' to urinate on my babies.

56 INT. MAIN COMPOUND - HALLWAY 56

Blair passing through, holding a chart and carrying a rack of test tubes, notices a large bandage on the floor. He picks it up, inquiringly. It is mangled and shredded.

57 INT. GENERATOR ROOM 57

Palmer works on the generator. He hears the sound of approaching propeller blades from outside. And then the sound of his tool box crashing to the floor. He turns to see what caused the ruckus.

The dog, who has entered the shed, has jumped on the work table and upended the tool box in its eagerness to look out of the above window. Palmer curses under his breath and calls out.

PALMER
Clark! Will you kennel this goddamn dog?
(bangs wrench against pipe)
Hey, Clark!!

58 THE DOG 58

It paws at the window and watches as the chopper, carrying MacReady and Dr. Copper, fights against the newly arrived heavy winds and lands safely.

59 INT. STATION MANAGER GARRY'S QUARTERS 59

Garry, MacReady, Dr. Copper, Norris, Bennings, Blair and his assistant, Fuchs, are present. The small Norwegian video unit has been set up and its contents are being viewed on a TV screen. Grainy, home movie-ish, no sound. The proceedings are grim.

Shots of the Norwegians at work. Others of them playing soccer on ice. Generally the footage is a prosaic record of their day-to-day life.

Norris shuffles the bundle of notes Dr. Copper brought back with him.

NORRIS
Can't make heads or tails out of most of this stuff, but I could read some of their coordinates. Numbers are numbers. And it seems they were spending a lot of time at a place four miles northeast of their camp.

GARRY
What were they involved in?

MacReady, working on the video machine, answers.

MAC READY
Little ice core drilling...some seismology...glaciology...same old shit we do.

The present footage is a shot of them all naked and probably drunk, holding a sign across their waists as they stand outdoors in super-freezing weather.

BENNINGS
How much more of this crap is there?

DR. COPPER
About nine more hours.

BENNINGS
We can't learn anything from this.

DR. COPPER
Probably right.

CONTINUED

59 CONTINUED 59

MacReady turns on the light and shuts off the video machine. He then slides the portable tape deck across the table to Dr. Copper. They exchange a look.

DR. COPPER
(continuing)
MacReady and I were listening to some of these cassettes on the way back.
(somberly)
Like you gentlemen to hear it.

A Norwegian voice drones on calmly, making verbal notes. Norris shrugs.

BENNINGS
What do you want from us?

MAC READY
(flat)
Just listen.

Dr. Copper fast forwards. The calm voice continues. And then a loud blast, followed by a pounding. The sounds of confusion. Voices. Loud. Frenetic. Men's feet running up and down wooden floorboards. A gurgling. A hissing. Screams. And then a screeching. More blasts mixed with the din of wild, carnage-wrought cries. And then more screeching. A screeching unlike anything these men have ever heard.

The men look from one another in silence as they listen. Dr. Copper turns it off.

DR. COPPER
Goes on like that quite awhile.
(beat)
What do you gentlemen make of it?

GARRY
Could be anything...Men in isolation ...some beef that snowballed...got out of hand...Or one man alone might have gone mad and done it all.

NORRIS
Maybe the whole camp got bent... Something they ate. What about food poisoning, Doc?

CONTINUED

59 CONTINUED - 2 59

Dr. Copper taps the tape deck pensively.

DR. COPPER
Maybe.

He glances at MacReady, and then back to the others.

DR. COPPER
(continuing)
There's something else we want you to see.

60 INT. INFIRMARY 60

Dr. Copper and MacReady begin dumping the heavy contents of a large plastic trash bag onto the slab.

DR. COPPER
We found this.

Displayed on the slab is what appears to be the corpse of a man. Badly charred. What is left of the trousers and shoes of the bottom torso are ripped and split, as if his legs and feet had burst from the inside. His upper body is an almost undecipherable gnarled mass of protoplasmic mush.

The head is strangely disfigured and looks larger than normal. It is situated not on its shoulders but near the abdomen. Tendon-like appendages are wrapped around the carcass and sticking up and out in odd postures. One is wrapped around the body's left leg.

The shirt has been ripped and lies shredded in the tar-like mess.

The men grimace.

DR. COPPER
(continuing)
I know he's pretty badly burned... but could fire have done this?

Blair, sickened but fascinated, pokes at the tendon-like things and the tarry goo.

DR. COPPER
Blair, I'd like you and Fuchs to help me with autopsies on this one and the one Garry shot this morning.

61 INT. REC ROOM - CLOSE ON A TABLE HOCKEY GAME - LATER 61

Foosball. Nauls and Clark are going at it hot and heavy.

Sanchez sits off in a corner thumbing through an old issue of Photoplay.

Bennings, Norris and Garry are engaged in a card game. Bennings is about to play a card when he feels something under the table. He looks. It is the dog.

BENNINGS
Clark, will you put this mutt with the others where he belongs?!

Clark fetches the dog from under the table.

CLARK
So there you are. Where you been all day?
(examines hip)
...Already gnawed off your bandage, huh?

62 INT. LAB 62

Larger than most of the other rooms and well-equipped. Dr. Copper is performing an autopsy on the Norwegian intruder, killed early that morning.

Blair sits over his microscope, while Fuchs prepares slides. The other body is draped with a sheet, waiting its turn. Dr. Copper pulls off his gloves.

DR. COPPER
Nothing wrong with this one. Physiologically, anyway.
(to Blair)
Find anything toxic?

BLAIR
No drugs...alcohol. Nothing.

63 INT. TUNNEL 63

Clark leads the dog through the long, cold tunnel toward the kennel. A new dressing has been placed on its hip.

He unlatches the door to the kennel and leads him in.

64 INT. KENNEL 64

About twenty feet long, five feet wide. Poorly lit. Cramped with dogs. Some of them sleeping. Others pacing around and curious, greet their new companion, sniffing, panting and rubbing up against him. Clark pats the dog and several others, then leaves, latching the door behind him.

65 INT. SLEEPING CUBICLE 65

Childs lies in his cot watching a small television. The show is a tape of an American TV game show. He has seen this one too many times, extracts the cassette and injects another game show.

Palmer is stretched out in the other cot, reading a comic book and smoking a joint. Childs beckons for it and takes a hit.

66 INT. PUB 66

A small area, just off the rec room. Set up like a bar. MacReady is alone looking over the rest of the videotapes from the Norwegian outpost. Mundane to esoteric chores of Antarctic camp life. He looks bored.

67 INT. LAB 67

Blair is hovered over his microscope. He wears a puzzled and disturbed look. He quickly switches slides. Looks. And switches back again, studying intently.

BLAIR
Doctor Copper, come here!

Copper, looking exhausted, approaches. Blair lays in a new slide.

BLAIR
(continuing)
Look at this.

Dr. Copper studies for a beat.

DR. COPPER
Dead tissue...Probably liver, no?

BLAIR
Yes.

CONTINUED

67 CONTINUED 67

Blair quickly sets in another slide, focuses and motions for Copper to take another look.

Copper is confused. He shrugs.

DR. COPPER
I don't understand.

Fuchs takes the opportunity to look. Blair moves over to the disfigured corpse and indicates one of the fibrous, tendon-like appendages.

BLAIR
It's tissue from one of these sinewy rods.

Fuchs is befuddled as he examines.

FUCHS
(befuddled)
What in the world kind of cell structure is this?

BLAIR
That's the point.

DR. COPPER
(tired)
I don't get you, Blair.

BLAIR
I'm not sure it is any kind of cell structure. Biologically speaking.

DR. COPPER
(sighing)
This really isn't my field, Blair. Let's wrap for the day and get back into this in the morning.

Dr. Copper undoes his lab coat and lays it over a chair as he exits. Blair stares down ominously at the mutilated body.

68 EXT. COMPOUND - NIGHT 68

A steady stream of sleet pounds the compound and small surrounding shacks.

69 INT. REC ROOM 69

Vacant. The wall clock reads four-thirty.

70 INT. HALLWAY 70

Sleeping cubicles on either side. The sound of snoring.

71 INT. PUB 71

MacReady, bleary-eyed, is still viewing the tapes. Something catches his eye. He rewinds, then starts it forward again.

The screen shows the Norwegians on the surface of what appears to be an enormous, flat glacier. They are spread out on the ice around a large odd oval shape; their arms outstretched.

It fades to black and then a Norwegian comes on mugging childishly in front of the camera, apparently quite pleased with something.

The tape fades to black again and the picture reappears. This time they have marked off the large oval area with flag sticks.

Closer shots show three of the men digging a deep hole into the ice. There is a small patch of something dark and metallic at the bottom.

MacReady leans forward, intrigued.

The men are now sinking something deep into the ice at various points around the markings. MacReady squints and mumbles to himself.

MAC READY
Decanite?...Thermite charges?...

The tape jump cuts again showing a long shot of the markings. No Norwegian in sight. An explosion kicks up the ice. A beat as the ice sprays to the ground. Then the camera appears to shake as the ground beneath it quivers.

Another immense explosion follows. An earthquake-like force throws the camera to the ground.

MAC READY
(continuing)
What in....

The tape continues, distorted, unviewable. A distinct crack in the lens. MacReady quickly rewinds.

72 INT. KENNEL - NIGHT 72

Most of the dogs are sleeping or lounging. The new dog watches them calmly, silently.

He takes several steps towards a group of about five dogs and sits upright. Completely still. He stares at them. A beat. The dogs are aware of something. They begin to seem a bit confused, uncomfortable.

The new dog continues to stare. Sitting rigidly, unnaturally still. His eyes dead, lusterless black spheres.

Bewildered, a few dogs start to pace. As if sensing something: a portent. A danger. But so odd. They begin a soft, purring growl.

The new dog remains a statue. The growling builds. More dogs begin to pace. Nervously. Faster, encircling. Emitting hisses, snarls. The lack of response driving them into a frenzy.

Barks. Growls. More frenetic pacing. The din escalating. Three dogs start to close in on the stranger. They attack.

73 THE SHADOW OF THE NEW DOG 73

against the kennel wall. The shadow suddenly lurches upward, seeming larger.

The kennel roars.

74 INT. PUB 74

MacReady is still going over bits of the same footage, fascinated. He hears the far-off clamor of the dogs.

75 INT. NAULS' QUARTERS 75

He, too, bothered by the noise, tosses and turns in his sleep.

76 INT. CLARK'S QUARTERS 76

Clark snores. MacReady has entered.

MAC READY

Clark.

CONTINUED

76 CONTINUED 76

No response. MacReady nudges him. Clark rolls away, annoyed.

MacReady pinches his snoring nose, cutting off the air. Clark sits up, groggy.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Dogtown's going nuts. Take care of it.

77 INT. TUNNEL 77

Clark, sleepy, irritated, makes his way down the freezing corridor. The wind soughing loudly overhead.

78 CLARK 78

reaches the kennel door. The savage outpouring of noise from within baffles and angers him. He unlatches the door.

CLARK
What's got into....

Smack! Just as he opens the door, two dogs, as if jettisoned from a cannon, knock him off his feet. Growls, barks, snarls. And a screeching from within.

79 INT. KITCHEN 79

MacReady is fetching himself a beer. The sound of the far-off screeching. He freezes. A beat. He turns and sprints.

80 HIS BEER CAN 80

as it smashes the glass of the fire alarm. He pulls the lever.

81 INT. TUNNEL 81

The alarm is blaring throughout the camp. MacReady, Garry, Norris run through the narrow tunnel led by Clark. MacReady carries a shotgun. Garry, half-dressed, has his .44. Clark, a fire ax.

CLARK
I don't know what the hell's in there, but it's weird and pissed off, whatever it is.

82 INT. HALLWAY 82

Chaos. Men, half naked, bounce from their cubicles. Pulling on their pants, digging into shoes.

Blair and Fuchs race past Sanchez, who stands in his long johns.

SANCHEZ
What's burning, man?

They shoot by him.

83 INT. CHILDS' CUBICLE 83

Childs is grappling with his belt buckle.

CHILDS
Mac wants the what??

BENNINGS
(at the doorway)
That's what he said. Now! Move!

Bennings is off.

84 INT. TUNNEL 84

as the men approach the locked kennel door. The two dogs thrown into Clark bark ferociously and scratch at the door trying to get back in. One is badly bloodied.

The fight inside rages on. MacReady and Clark brace themselves by the narrow door. Norris and Garry hold back the two hysterical dogs. Clark undoes the latch and he and MacReady enter the kennel.

The light has been broken and it is pitch black. MacReady snaps on his flashlight. Norris and Garry can't contain their animals and the dogs burst into the room. They smash into MacReady and send him sprawling. Total confusion: the dogs; the men; the screeching; the blackness.

CLARK
Mac, where are you?

MacReady gropes for his flashlight and rights himself. He finds Clark. Then shines it around the cramped room trying to get his bearings.

The light finds a mass of dogs in a wild melee in the corner.

CONTINUED

84 CONTINUED 84

Barking mixed with hissing, a gurgling, a screeching. Dogs being hurled about and then charging back into the fray with a vengeance.

The flashlight illuminates parts of some "thing." A dog. But not quite. Impossible to tell. It struggles powerfully. Garry pokes his head into the blackness.

GARRY
What's going on, damn it?

MacReady aims his shotgun at the entire pack.

MAC READY
I'm going to shoot.

CLARK
No! Wait!!

Clark wades into the pack, grabs at dogs' hides and throws them back. He then wields his ax into the fray, chopping and hacking away at the gurgling, hissing silhouette.

From out of nowhere, a large, bristly, arachnid-like leg springs up and wraps around Clark's ax. It sends Clark smashing violently into the wall.

85 OUTSIDE 85

More men running, nearing the kennel. Several squeezing in with Garry, trying to get a look.

86 INSIDE 86

MacReady fires several rounds. A dog is flung at him, knocking him and his flashlight once more to the ground.

Garry squeezes in and begins blasting away in the direction of the hissing and screeching. A dog is hit. MacReady crawls for his flashlight.

MAC READY
Clark? Where are you? Clark!

Blam. Blam. Garry continues firing at the silhouette.

87 INT. TUNNEL 87

Childs, huffing and puffing, lugs the huge industrial torch toward the crowded kennel doorway.

CONTINUED

87 CONTINUED 87

CHILDS
What's happening?

MAC READY (o.s.)
Childs, you got that torch? You get your ass in here!!

88 INT. KENNEL 88

Childs scrunches in, disoriented by the blackness, and bumps into Garry, knocking him off balance.

CHILDS
Where are you?

MacReady signals with his flashlight and then points it at the gathering of snarling dogs.

MAC READY
Torch it over there!

CHILDS
The dogs?

MAC READY
Screw the dogs!! Torch it!!

Childs lets loose with a burst of blue flame. A mewing, a screeching.

Part of the kennel starts to burn.

GARRY
(panic)
We're on fire!

MAC READY
Don't let up, Childs!

GARRY
(to outside)
Extinguishers.

Childs moves closer, continuing his assault on the hissing, gurgling presence.

Men charge into the room and begin spraying dogs and burning walls. Dogs and men choke and cough amidst the smoke and CO_2.

The screeching lessens. The hissing and gurgling fade. Childs turns off his torch.

CUT TO

89 INT. REC ROOM - NEXT MORNING 89

Those of the men that have gathered exhibit a pale and quiet uneasiness about them.

Blair, in silent awe, stands over the badly burned corpses of two interlocking dogs, that lie before him on a table.

They are connected as if they were one animal. Though, the one wearing the remnants of Clark's bandage is much larger and appears less doglike. Its entire torso is cracked and peeled, as if its innards were trying to burst out.

Odd appendages, recoiled and withered by the flame, are wrapped grotesquely about both bodies.

Clark, his eyes set in glassy stare, sits in shock. Nauls comforts him. Childs stands nearby smoking a joint and staring at the floor.

Blair, transfixed, continues hovering over the united cadavers. Weighing. Thinking. A very worried look on his face.

The dead bodies of two other dogs from the kennel are not far off.

90 INT. INFIRMARY 90

Fuchs is attending to the shredded bodies of three other badly wounded dogs.

91 INT. REC ROOM 91

Nauls pats Clark on the shoulder and grins, trying to pick up his spirits.

NAULS
It's okay now, man. It's dead.
It's over.
(turning)
Right, boys? Right, Blair? You
tell my man here, Blair.

Blair tries to smile.

BLAIR
Of course it is.

CONTINUED

91 CONTINUED 91

NAULS
(to Clark)
You see.

Clark turns to him with a childlike smile.

CLARK
I know. Mr. Childs killed it.
I saw.

NAULS
Right, man. Right.

Dr. Copper enters and hands Clark a glass of water and two pills.

DR. COPPER
Take these.

92 INT. SMALL WORKROOM 92

Norris is going through some maps. MacReady is bent over his shoulder. Norris finds the one he's looking for.

NORRIS
Here. This is where they were spending most of their time.

MAC READY
(takes map)
This is the exact location?

NORRIS
That and a couple other places.

MAC READY
Well, find them all. And mark them so I'll know exactly.

Bennings pokes his head in the room.

BENNINGS
Pretty nasty out, Mac. Thirty-five knots.

MAC READY
Screw it, I'm going up anyway.

93 INT. MAIN COMPOUND - MORNING 93

Station Manager Garry has joined Blair by the stuck-together bodies. Blair motions to the bandage.

CONTINUED

93 CONTINUED 93

BLAIR
Wasn't anything that got in from the outside. Was that dog. The Norwegian dog.

GARRY
I just can't comprehend any of this. It was <u>just</u> a dog.

CHILDS
(evenly)
'Tweren't no dog, Bwana.

BLAIR
That tape MacReady showed us this morning....

GARRY
Couldn't make much of it myself.

BLAIR
I've asked him to try and locate the site. Okay with you?

GARRY
Sure. You think there's a connection?

BLAIR
Maybe.

94 EXT. CHOPPER 94

high above the Antarctic expanse.

95 INT. CHOPPER 95

MacReady pilots. Young Palmer and Norris are with him. It is clear but the winds are troublesome. The ride is a shaky one. Norris refers to their map. He points.

NORRIS
One of their sites would be directly over here.

They aim for a large mountainous wall. As they go up and over...they see:

96 A FLAT, GLACIAL EXPANSE 96

On the surface, an enormous blackened oval shape.

97 INT. U.S. OUTPOST #31 - LAB 97

All the bodies of the dogs have been brought in. Fuchs stands by as Blair studies through his microscope.

98 INSERT - A MICROSCOPIC SAMPLING 98

of two cells. They appear to be much different from each other. They are joined at the ends but are completing the process of breaking off from each other.

99 ON BLAIR 99

A disturbed look on his face. He checks his watch, as if timing the procedure.

100 EXT. GLACIER - TRACKING WITH MAC READY, NORRIS AND PALMER 100

as they walk along the ice. They come to a stop at the edge of a sharp drop.

Pull back to reveal -- the massive black hole about fifteen feet beneath the ice. Charred, gnarled and mangled metal are all that is left of what was once an enormous sphere.

The twisted remains of a superstructure, the only surviving indicator of its shape.

MacReady's and Norris' eyes meet each other in silence. Palmer is in awe.

PALMER

Wow....

MacReady finds a burnt thermite canister. He and Norris climb down.

They move along amongst the wreck. Almost everything but the skeletal superstructure has disintegrated into a fine ashy powder.

Norris digs for ice samples at the perimeter of the wreckage, while MacReady browses through the center.

Palmer continues to marvel, as he walks around the oval, atop the ice.

MacReady returns and kneels down next to Norris as the latter examines a piece of metal.

CONTINUED

100 CONTINUED 100

NORRIS
Magnesium of some type...or some kind of strange alloy.
(looks out at debris in disgust)
And those poor dumb bastards had to go and blow the hell out of it.

MAC READY
So what do you make of it?

NORRIS
You know damn well what we both make of it.

MAC READY
No chance it could have been some new kind of test craft?

Norris shakes his head no.

NORRIS
Seismic activity has been pushing this area up from way down for a long time...
(holds up ice sample)
...This ice it was buried in...It's over a hundred thousand years old.

Palmer calls out, waving them over.

101 EXT. GLACIER 101

The two men join Palmer about fifty yards from the oval. A large rectangular chunk has been cut out of the ice. It is fifteen feet long, six feet wide and eight feet deep.

MacReady kneels down to observe. A beat.

A gust of wind picks up the snow at their feet.

CUT TO

102 INT. REC ROOM - NIGHT 102

Fascinated, a few of the men are reviewing the Norwegian video-tapes of the finding of the mysterious craft. MacReady sits quietly by his chess set. contemplating a large glass of Scotch. Clark, less interested than the others, is flipping through the Norwegian Nudie magazine.

CONTINUED

102 CONTINUED 102

Blair, looking worried, sits off in a corner, pondering the photo of the block of ice and fingering a piece of crumbled-up metal brought back from the site.

Childs, viewing the tapes, can't quite believe it all.

CHILDS
Okay now, Mac, run this by me again. Thousands of years ago this rocket ship crashes, right?..And the....

MacReady is not listening.

CHILDS
(continuing)
MacReady!

MAC READY
Look I'm just guessing....

CHILDS
Well, go on.

MAC READY
So it crashes, and this guy, who-ever he is, gets thrown out, or walks out, and ends up freezing.

CHILDS
I just can't believe this voodoo bullshit. You believe this voodoo bullshit, Blair?

Blair says nothing, lost in thought.

Palmer, stoned, a joint dangling from his mouth, is searching for information through stacks of old issues of The National Enquirer and The Star.

PALMER
(rambling)
Happens all the time, man. They're falling out of the skies like flies. Government knows all about it... Chariots of the Gods, man...They practically own South America. I mean they taught the Incas every-thing they knew....

CHILDS
Cool it, Palmer!!

CONTINUED

102 CONTINUED - 2 102

Palmer shakes a magazine at him adamantly.

PALMER
Read von Daniken! Have you read von Daniken? Get your facts straight!

Clark marvels at a particular photo.

CLARK
Jesus, why would those guys ever want to leave Norway...?

CHILDS
(pacing)
So, MacReady, come on now. These Norwegian dudes come by...find him and dig this guy up....

MAC READY
Yeah, they dig him up and cart him back. He gets thawed out, wakes up and scares the shit out of them. And they get into one hell of a brawl....

CHILDS
Now how's this motherfucker wake up after thousands of years in the ice, huh?

MAC READY
(annoyed)
I don't know how. Because he's different than we are. Because he's a space guy. He can do things like that. A little ice doesn't faze him. What do you want from me, anyway. Go ask Blair.

CHILDS
You buy any of this, Blair?

A beat as Blair stares straight ahead, transfixed. He speaks softly; to no one in particular.

BLAIR
It was here...got to that dog...It was here in this camp....

CONTINUED

102 CONTINUED - 3 102

The men take in his grave countenance.

GARRY
So?..So what? It's over with.

Blair turns to them. A pause. The men search his face.

BENNINGS
(edgy)
Well, isn't it?

103 INT. LAB - CLOSE ON A SHEET 103

as Blair rips it off exposing the tangled mess of interlocking dogs.

Pull back. All the men have gathered. Some of the men settle into chairs, others stand.

BLAIR
Whatever that Norwegian dog was... It...It was capable of changing its form...
(indicates their dog)
...when it attacked our dog...it somehow was able to digest...or... or absorb it...and in the process shaped its own cells to imitate our dog's cells exactly...
(holds up gooey dog leg)
...This for instance isn't dog at all -- it's imitation...We got to it before it had time to finish or....

NAULS
Finish what?

BLAIR
Well...I checked some of this tissue under the scope...I think the whole process would have taken an hour... maybe more. And then I suppose both would have changed back to dog form.

CONTINUED

103 CONTINUED 103

DR. COPPER
Some type of asexual reproduction?

BLAIR
Something like that...but not really....

PALMER
Well, that Thing in the ice sure weren't no dog.

BLAIR
(impatient)
Of course not...We'll probably never know what its original form was like...But whenever it was revived, it...Well, The Thing was probably disoriented...and realized it couldn't survive, long for long in our atmosphere...But being the incredibly adaptable creature it was ...it tried to become something that could...Before the Norwegians killed it...it somehow got to this dog.

CLARK
What do you mean 'got' to the dog?

BLAIR
It was a life form that was able to imitate and reproduce, whatever it ate or absorbed, cell for cell -- and without losing any of its original mass.

Silence.

BLAIR
The concept is staggering, I know... I...I don't fully understand it myself.

CHILDS
(skeptically, points)
You're saying...that big muther in the ice, became that dog.

CONTINUED

103 CONTINUED - 2 103

BLAIR
(nodding)
I think we're talking about an organism...that could imitate other life forms...perfectly...It could have gone on and on...It could have become one dog...it could have become as many dogs as it wanted to -- and without losing any of it's own self....

NORRIS
You been into Childs' weed, Blair?

Blair slams his fist on the slab.

BLAIR
Look, I know it's hard to believe....

GARRY
(breaking in)
So what's our problem?

BLAIR
Well...there's still some cell activity...it's not entirely dead yet.

Several of the men nearest the carcasses jump back knocking over a chair.

CUT TO

104 EXT. COMPOUND - NIGHT -SPLASH - CLOSE ON THE DOG CARCASSES 104

lying on the snow. They are being soaked with gasoline.

FUCHS (o.s.)
(in violent protestation)
You can't do this! You can't burn these remains....

Pull back. Fuchs is beside himself. Childs has the large torch. MacReady empties another can on the bodies. Dr. Copper stands nearby.

FUCHS
(continuing)
...Don't you know how important....

CONTINUED

104 CONTINUED 104

MAC READY
And the horse you road in on, Fuchs.
(to Childs)
Light it up.

Childs lights the tip.

FUCHS
How can you be a party to this, Copper?

DOCTOR COPPER
Look, Fuchs....

Fuchs makes a determined move for the torch.

FUCHS
Well, I'm not going to let this happen....

He grabs the torch. Childs struggles with him for a beat and then flings him to the ground. Dr. Copper grabs him preventing him from getting back up and rebukes him sternly.

DOCTOR COPPER
Fuchs, you know damn well these carcasses could have properties we'd never be able to deal with. New viruses...bacteria...We're doing the only thing we should be doing....

FUCHS
What we should be doing is making sure that better men than you or I have a chance to examine this material.

Childs splayes the remains with a jet of flame. Fuchs shakes his head in frustration and disgust.

FUCHS
I just can't believe it...We're going to go down as the biggest bunch of assholes in history....

MAC READY
Fuck history. At least we're going to live to be an old bunch of ass-holes.

CUT TO

105 INT. KENNEL - NIGHT 105

The night feeding. Clark dishes out the food. Blair is taking blood samples from the remaining three dogs.

BLAIR
(perplexed; bothered)
Clark, did you notice anything strange about that dog? Just anything at all? Any little thing?

CLARK
No. Just that he recovered real quick...That night when I found him in the rec room, he had already scraped off his bandage. Before I put him with the others, I redressed his wound and noticed it had healed up real good....

A beat as Blair stares at Clark.

BLAIR
That night?

CLARK
(pets dog vigorously)
Yeah.

BLAIR
What was he doing in the rec room?

CLARK
Well, after I worked on him -- thought I'd let him rest. Left the room for a bit. When I came back, he was gone.

BLAIR
Well, where was he? Where did he go?

CLARK
Don't know. Looked for him for a bit...couldn't find him.

BLAIR
(a long beat)
You're saying he wasn't put into the kennel until the night?

Clark seems uneasy under Blair's intense gaze.

105 CONTINUED 105

CLARK
Well...yeah.

Blair stands, his eyes still glued to Clark.

BLAIR
How long were you with the dog?
Alone, I mean?

CLARK
Ah...He was hurt bad. Bullet nicked an artery...I don't know...An hour ...hour and a half....

Blair's eyes glaze as if in revelation.

CLARK
(continuing)
What the hell you looking at me like that for?

BLAIR
Nothing. Nothing at all.

He backs out of the kennel.

106 INT. HALLWAY - COMPOUND 106

Irritated, harrassed, station manager Garry moves briskly down the hall. Blair, worried and pale, tries to keep up with him.

BLAIR
...It could have gotten to somebody....

GARRY
Anybody sick?

BLAIR
No, I...I don't mean infection... or disease....

Garry stops at the entrance to the communications room.

GARRY
Any luck yet?

Sanchez shrugs.

SANCHEZ
Couple seconds of an Argentine disco station.

CONTINUED

106 CONTINUED 106

GARRY
Well, stick with it. I want you in here round the clock. We got to get help in here....

BLAIR
(alarm)
No...No, you can't let anyone in here...That dog was all over this camp....

Bennings interrupts, entering the hallway, refering to his meterological chart.

BENNINGS
(to Garry)
Travel wise weather's looking pretty grim, next couple weeks anyway....

FUCHS
...Goddamn fools....

The men from outside come stomping through the hallway. Fuchs approaches Blair.

FUCHS
You've still got those slides?

BLAIR
(absently)
Slides..?
(waving him off)
...Forgot about the slides....

CHILDS
What slides?!..Well, not anymore you don't got no slides....

Childs moves toward the lab.

CHILDS
...We ain't leaving a trace of that crap around.

Fuchs sprints after him.

FUCHS
No you don't, Childs.

CHILDS
I'll burn up that micro-scope if I have to....

GARRY
(angered, watching them scuffle)
Cut it out you two!!

CONTINUED

106 CONTINUED - 2 106

BLAIR
(pleading)
Listen to me, Garry. Please....

GARRY
(to MacReady)
If the weather clears enough before we reach anybody -- I'm sending you and the Doc up to MacMurdo....

BLAIR
No! You can't let people leave....

MAC READY
I ain't going anywhere in anything over forty knots, Garry....

GARRY
(snapping)
The hell you won't, MacReady!

BLAIR
Don't you understand?! That thing didn't want to become a dog....

GARRY
(fed up)
Damn you, Blair! You've already got everybody half-hysterical around here. You should have come to me with your crazy findings first....

BLAIR
You can't let anybody leave!

GARRY
I've got six dead Norwegians on my hands, a burned up flying saucer, and we've just destroyed the scientific find of the century. Now fuck off!!

Blair, ashen-faced, falls silent. As if in a daze, he watches the men as they continue to converse. Suspicious, frightened.

MAC READY (o.s.)
What's it like?

BENNINGS (o.s.)
Tomorrow maybe okay...but after that some pretty nasty northeasternly shit's coming in....

GARRY (o.s.)
I'll send Palmer if I have to, MacReady.

CUT TO

107 INT. KITCHEN 107

Nauls, about to prepare dinner, scowls as he rummages through his many cabinets.

NAULS
Where's that big ol' steel pot of mine?! Damn!

He turns to examine the cabinets above the large stove. He spots something in the nearby kitchen trash can. Disgusted, he pulls out a torn and shredded pair of long johns.

CUT TO

108 INT. REC ROOM 108

MacReady, a can of beer by his side, is blowing up some strange inflatable object. Childs, looking worried, halts his game of solitaire.

CHILDS
Maybe we should fumigate this place or something...mix up some kind of DDT stuff?

Bennings is playing solitaire also.

BENNINGS
Don't worry about it.

MacReady puffs away. His balloon begins to take shape.

CHILDS
I mean they may be bugs floating all over this place.

Palmer playing pinballs offers:

PALMER
The clap. Space clap.

MacReady's inflatable object turns out to be a full size replica of a big busted woman. She slightly resembles Farrah Fawcett. MacReady smiles up at her.

MAC READY
Not to worry, boys. Penicillin will kill anything. Right, honey? Just ask her. She looks like she ought to know.

CONTINUED

108 CONTINUED 108

He gives her an affectionate peck on the cheek.

Nauls skates into the room. He shakes the crumpled up pair of long johns in his fist.

NAULS
Which one you muthers been tossing his dirty underwear in the kitchen trash?!

He flings it across the room. It hits MacReady's mannequin and sends it sputtering around the room.

NAULS
(continuing)
I want my kitchen clean. Germ free! We got enough problems with germs.

Nauls spins on his skates and storms off. MacReady fetches the strangely shredded underwear, rolls it up and throws it across the room into the trash bin.

109 EXT. COMPOUND - NIGHT 109

Pitch black except for the barest of lighting which outlines the building. Wind. The swirl of ice.

110 INT. MAC READY'S CABIN - NIGHT 110

Far away from the others MacReady sits in his little hovel putting the final screw into his mended chess set. On the other side of the set, his busty, inflatable companion has been propped up in a chair. His sombrero hangs down her back, keeping her in place. Hawaiian music plays from his tape deck.

MAC READY
All set.

He puts down his screwdriver, holds up his glass and offers a toast with a big grin.

MAC READY
(continuing)
To you, my dear.

CONTINUED

110 CONTINUED 110

He clinks the drink he has made for her that rests on her side of the board. He sips. He turns on the machine and makes his first move.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Now go easy on me, Esperanza.
I'm just a beginner.

The set answers for Esperanza.

CHESS VOICE
Rook takes bishop at queen four --
rook takes pawn at queen two --
rook takes queen at queen one --
checkmate.

MAC READY
Aw shit.

He flips open the circuitry panel in disgust. He tosses his screwdriver on the board and grabs his drink, downing it.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Sorry, hon.

He reaches inside his ice bucket. Empty.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Never any damn ice around here....

111 EXT. MAC READY'S CABIN - NIGHT 111

MacReady exits. He swacks at a nearby bank of ice with a small ice pick.

MAC READY
Now in Mexico...Tahiti...They got ice...They got ice coming out of their ears.

The sound of a clanking. He turns his attention. Metal against metal. Strange. MacReady listens. It appears to be coming from far off below, near the camp.

112 MAC READY 112

as he makes his way down with the aid of the steadying ropes. The clanking louder now. He senses the direction.

112-A MAC READY 112-A

at the bottom near the main compound. The sound has stopped. He looks around in the near blackness. A beat.

113 THE CHOPPERS 113

sitting idle in the dark. MacReady approaches. The door to one of the cockpits is slightly ajar. He opens it cautiously.

114 INT. CHOPPER 114

MacReady slips in. He turns on a flashlight. The controls have been mangled. Beaten with something heavy. Bang!! MacReady, startled, turns. Like the sound of a gun. Coming from the main compound.

115 INT. COMPOUND - MAIN ENTRANCE 115

Confusion. Shouts. MacReady enters. He grabs Palmer as he and Bennings rush by.

MAC READY
What's....

PALMER
Blair. He's gone berserk.

BENNINGS
He's in the radio room. Got a gun.
Beat on Sanchez something fierce.

116 HALLWAY - RADIO ROOM ENTRANCE 116

The men are on either side of the open radio room doorway. Garry peeks his head in. A gunshot blast forces him back.

117 RADIO ROOM 117

Sanchez lies on the floor, groaning. Blair holds the gun on the door. He wields a fire ax with the other hand and smashes down on the radio.

CONTINUED

117 CONTINUED 117

BLAIR
Anybody interferes, I'll kill! Nobody's getting in or out of this camp....

118 HALLWAY 118

MacReady has joined the others.

MAC READY
He smashed one of the choppers up good. Childs, go check the other one and the tractor.

Childs is off.

119 RADIO ROOM 119

Blair crunches the ax down once again, while keeping an eye on the door.

BLAIR
...You think I'm crazy? Fine! Most of you don't know what's going on -- but I'm damn well sure some of you do!
(crunch)
It can imitate anything! Become anything! It can imitate us!..And it wants to leave...to get out of here....

120 BACK TO HALLWAY 120

NORRIS
The back window. A couple of us could maybe surprise him.

MAC READY
Too damn dangerous.

121 BACK TO RADIO ROOM 121

BLAIR
...Dogs can't make it 1000 miles to the sea. No skua gulls to imitate this time of year...No penguins this far inland. There's nothing that can reach the sea from here except us!

CONTINUED

121 CONTINUED 121

He brings the ax down hard on the radio.

122 BACK TO HALLWAY 122

Childs runs up, out of breath.

CHILDS
He got both choppers and the tractor...I don't know how bad yet.

Garry readies his large .357 magnum.

MAC READY
No, wait a minute.
(to Norris)
The fuse box.

Norris double-times down the hall.

MacReady turns the corner and into the rec room. He grabs one of the thick card tables.

MacReady returns with the table to the hallway.

BLAIR
...Don't you understand? It doesn't want to attack us...or kill us. It wants to become us! All of us!..If one cell of this Thing got out it could imitate every living thing on Earth. Nothing could stop it! Nothing!

MAC READY
(humoring)
Look, Blair, maybe you're right about this. But we've got to be rational. We've got to talk this over. I'm unarmed and I'm coming in.

BLAIR
No, you're not! I don't trust any of you!

123 NORRIS 123

reaches the fuse box. He opens it.

124 HALLWAY 124

MacReady readies the table like a shield.

MAC READY
If you're right we've all got to stick together.

The lights go. MacReady charges into the black room. Blair fires. MacReady barrels into him, knocking him to the ground. He pummels him with a right hand and manages to control the gun.

The others dive in and pile on.

CUT TO

125 INT. BLAIR'S QUARTERS - NEXT DAY 125

Blair sleeps soundly on his bunk. Dr. Copper and Fuchs watch him.

DR. COPPER
Sit with him for a while, will you?

Fuchs nods. Copper exits.

CUT TO

126 INT. HALLWAY 126

Garry and Norris, looking weary, move along. Dr. Copper follows.

GARRY
How is he?

DR. COPPER
Heavily sedated. He'll be out for a while.

GARRY
Was he still ranting on about killing us?

DR. COPPER
Before he dozed off...the same.

GARRY
I think he's too damn dangerous to have hanging around camp.

NORRIS
We could put him out in that tool shed. It's comfortable...warm.

GARRY
Not a bad idea. He can ride it out there.

127 EXT. COMPOUND - DAY 127

Harsh and grey. Getting very dark as winter takes a stronger hold. Bennings is dumping the trash in a large hold in the snow which acts as the trash dump.

Bennings finishes and drags the empty bins past Palmer and Childs, who are fixing the wounded choppers.

BENNINGS
These ladies ever gonna fly again?

CHILDS
He really did a number. But I think we're lucky.

128 INT. RADIO ROOM 128

The radio looks a mess. Norris and Sanchez, a bandage wrapped around his head, examine the damage. He is in pain and still looks a little groggy.

SANCHEZ
I'll see what I can do. But they didn't teach me much about fixing these things.

Norris smiles and pats him comfortingly.

NORRIS
They didn't teach you much about working them either.

129 EXT. COMPOUND 129

Heavily clothed, MacReady and Fuchs help the sedated Blair to the tool shed some seventy-five yards from the main compound. They have brought thick wooden boards with them.

130 INT. TOOL SHED 130

More spacious than MacReady's. Very livable. They enter and set Blair down on the cot. There are two windows. MacReady motions to one of them.

MAC READY
You take that one. I'll get the other. Leave a bit of an opening so he can see out.

131 EXT. SHACK 131

Fuchs and MacReady nail the boards over the windows, as they can't be locked from the outside. Blair's droopy-eyed, heavily drugged features loom up at MacReady through the window.

MAC READY
How you doin', old boy?

BLAIR
(softly)
I don't know who to trust.

MAC READY
(humoring)
Know what you mean, Blair. Trust is a tough thing to come by these days. Just trust in the Lord.

BLAIR
(beat)
Watch Clark.

MAC READY
What?

BLAIR
Watch him close. Ask him why he didn't kennel the dog.

Blair's face disappears from the window.

CUT TO

132 INT. MESS HALL - MORNING - CLOSE ON A BUFFET OF EGGS, BACON, TOAST, ETC. 132

Pull back. The men help themselves. It is a cramped, elongated room.

Dr. Copper approaches Nauls and hands him a capsule.

DR. COPPER
Put this in Blair's juice before you take him his tray.

Clark comes running into the room, pallid, out of breath. The men turn to look.

CLARK
The dogs....

CUT TO

133 INT. THE KENNEL 133

Empty. Clark and Garry examine the latch of the kennel door.

GARRY
Doesn't look broken.

CLARK
No. Door was wide open. I know I latched it.

134 EXT. COMPOUND ABOVE THE UNDERGROUND KENNEL - CLOSE ON DOGS' TRACKS 134

in the snow. They lead from the kennel's open stairwell and out onto the ice. All the men have gathered.

CLARK
All three of them took off.

NORRIS
Have they ever done this before?

CLARK
No.

GARRY
Then why?

BENNINGS
Maybe spooked by the other night.

MacReady is writing down what appears to be a list on a pad.

DR. COPPER
How long do you suppose they've been gone?

CLARK
I haven't seen them since their last feeding. Could be as much as twenty-four hours.

MAC READY
They couldn't have gotten that far in this weather.

Garry and several others turn to MacReady quizzically.

GARRY
You're not thinking of going after them, are you?

CONTINUED

134 CONTINUED 134

MAC READY
I am going after them.

NORRIS
What in hell for? Even if Blair's right -- they'll just die out there. No food. They're over a thousand miles from anything.

PALMER
Choppers aren't going to be ready for days.

MacReady hands his list to Bennings.

MAC READY
Get these things out of supply and meet me over by the snowmobiles.

GARRY
You're not going to catch them in one of those with the start they got.

MAC READY
Palmer, how long would it take you to strap those big four-cylinder carburetors on?

PALMER
(grins)
Oh, I got you. Not too long.

MAC READY
Then get a move on. Childs, come with me.

He puts his arm around Childs and pulls him along. The others watch them walk off, a little bewildered.

GARRY
(shouting after them)
Besides, what are you going to do when you catch up to them?
(no answer)
Damn fool.

Bennings is reading MacReady's list.

CONTINUED

134 CONTINUED - 2 134

BENNINGS
Holy shit.
(hands list
to Garry)
Whatever he's going to do, he
ain't fucking around.

135 EXT. OUTDOOR WORK AREA - CLOSE ON THE BARREL 135

of the large torch. A fierce stream of flame bursts from its nozzle.

Pull back. The stream has shot out some fifteen feet. Childs has been modifying it.

CHILDS
I can get maybe another five or
six feet out of it.

MAC READY
That's good enough.

136 CLOSE ON PALMER 136

as he works on the snowmobiles. Into frame rolls a wheelbarrow on sleds. A box marked DYNAMITE is its most prominent article. Pull back. Bennings reads off the list of supplies.

BENNINGS
All right...Box of dynamite...box
of thermite...three shotguns...
box of flares...two flare guns...
thirty cans gasoline...and a case
of alcohol.

MAC READY
Let's load 'em.

137 EXT. ANTARCTICA - ICESCAPE 137

The two vehicles rip across the hard, flat ice, bolstered by the added horsepower. They follow the still visible dog tracks in the snow.

CUT TO

138 THE SUN 138

sliding across the horizon, signaling midday. The snowmobiles whoosh past. Bennings drives the one loaded with supplies. MacReady and Childs double up on the other.

CUT TO

139 MAC READY 139

steadying his binoculars, while Childs drives, spots something up ahead. The vehicles slow down and come to a halt. Something lies just ahead of them in the whiteness, in the middle of the dog tracks.

140 THE MEN 140

kneel down by the "something." It is the half-eaten remains of a dog. Its hind legs and lower stomach picked clean. Its ripped hide, flapping in the wind. Its top half missing.

CHILDS
What is it?

MacReady follows the line of continuing dog tracks.

MAC READY
Maybe dinner.

BENNINGS
Dogs don't eat each other.

MAC READY
(beat)
I know.

CHILDS
Where's the other half?

MAC READY
Probably the next meal.

MacReady moves to the snowmobile and grabs a two-gallon can of gasoline. He turns to Bennings.

MAC READY
Where these tracks headed?

BENNINGS
Nowhere...Just straight to the ocean.

CONTINUED

140 CONTINUED 140

A beat as MacReady takes this in. He pours the gas over the remains and sets it aflame.

MAC READY
Let's move.

Childs and Bennings are not that anxious to continue.

CHILDS
They could be hours ahead of us, Mac.

BENNINGS
Gonna get dark soon, too. Supposed to be fifty below tonight.

MacReady gets in and revs up the engine.

MAC READY
Turn back if you want.

Childs and Bennings return shrugs.

CUT TO

141 THE SUN 141

making its last pass, rolling off the horizon. Only a slight orange hue left.

CUT TO

142 THE SNOWMOBILES 142

move slower, positioned on either side of the tracks. The tracks abruptly change direction. The men come to a stop. It is much colder now. Their beards, a mask of white powder.

MacReady surveys the new direction. They are headed toward a far-off ridge of bluffs. Large, windswept mounds of ice.

CUT TO

143 THE SNOWMOBILES 143

as they move through a valley of newly-formed dunes and tall ice cliffs. The last of the sun obscured, the headlamps are turned on and pointed at the tracks.

The men look behind, in front, and from side to side, as they proceed cautiously through the maze. Up ahead MacReady spots:

144 A DOG 144

It sits, its back to them, unconcerned, heedless of their arrival. It is munching on the other half of the dog carcass.

The men stop their machines some twenty yards from it. They are hemmed in at the valley's narrowest point.

Childs, carrying the torch, and MacReady, armed with a thermite bomb, wade awkwardly but carefully toward the animal in their snowshoes. Bennings stands back by the snowmobiles.

Childs and MacReady spread out some dozen feet from the dog. It continues to pay them no mind, content to chew its food.

CHILDS
Where's the other one?

Bennings surveys the tops of the snow bluffs that encircle them with his flashlight.

MAC READY
(to dog)
Where's your buddy, boy? Huh?

No response. MacReady searches the near vicinity with his light. All three are growing uneasy.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Let that thing fly, Childs. Don't let up until he's ash.

Childs turns on the gas and lights the tip.

Bennings is still watching the bluffs. Something from beneath the snow reaches up and grabs his feet. He is ripped back down through the hard snow in one incredibly powerful motion. He screams, his head the only thing sticking out of the ice.

Childs and MacReady turn, confused, unable to see anything but Bennings' screaming head. They rush toward him. MacReady stumbles.

The sound of a snapping, a crackling to MacReady's rear. He freezes; turns back to the dog. Its back is still to him; its coat of hair sticking up like that of a porcupine. It snarls; its face turns slowly toward him. Its skin splitting; its mouth ripping open wildly.

MAC READY
Childs!!

144 CONTINUED 144

Childs stops, confused as to who to help first. He notices the dog haunched and ready to spring. He steps back toward MacReady. The dog/Thing leaps for MacReady; an incredible jump of some twenty feet.

Childs lets loose a blast, hitting the dog in midair; the force of the spray knocking it back and tumbling to the ice in flames.

MacReady throws his thermite canister. It discharges and engulfs the screeching animal in fire.

145 BENNINGS 145

howling in pain. The ice underneath him thrashes violently. Childs and MacReady stand by helplessly, unable to see what has him or what action to take. Childs moves closer to help.

MAC READY
(pulls him back)
No don't!!

Bennings' head disappears with a sudden jerk through the ice. The ice continues to rumble like boiling water, moving in different directions. Part of Bennings' body pops up in a different area and is just as quickly pulled back down.

MacReady and Childs watch on in frustration and anger.

CHILDS
What we going to do?!

MAC READY
How the fuck do I know?!

Bennings' head and shoulders then surface near one of the snowmobiles. Something has him. Unclear as to what. The jowls of a dog. But huge. Bennings' heavy clothing begins to rip, tear, as if his skin underneath was bulging out. The jowls seem to be absorbing its head.

MacReady runs for the snowmobile.

MAC READY
Torch them!!

CHILDS
But....

MAC READY
He's gone already! Do it!

CONTINUED

145 CONTINUED 145

Childs blasts away. The ice begins to melt as Bennings and whatever has him catch fire. A screeching.

MacReady grabs cans of gas from the snowmobiles. Suddenly a steel-like, arachnid-shaped arm shoots out in pain and with incredible force pierces the fiber glass chassis of the snowmobile. MacReady is knocked back. He recovers and dumps cans of gasoline on the writhing mess.

He dives and rolls away from the lunging appendage.

He and Childs watch on as Bennings and The Thing roar in flame. Behind them, the other dog/Thing continues to burn. The screeching, mewing and gurgling wails on, all about them.

They look to each other in disbelief, their faces illuminated by the flickering flames. The strident sounds beginning to subside.

146 THE SUN 146

Its slim, orange arc sets, signaling the start of the Vernal Equinox. And the beginning of six months of darkness.

CUT TO

147 INT. COMPOUND - REC ROOM 147

The men are interrogating Clark. He is frazzled and defensive.

CLARK
...I'm telling you I don't remember leaving the kennel unlatched....

Childs is holding the industrial torch directly in his face.

CHILDS
Bullshit! You left it open so they could get out!

148 EXT. TRASH DUMP 148

MacReady, waist-deep in trash and snow, searches for something.

149 INT. REC ROOM 149

The interrogation continues.

CONTINUED

149 CONTINUED 149

CLARK
...Would I even have told you they were gone if I had anything to hide?

GARRY
But why didn't you kennel that dog right away?

CLARK
I told you I couldn't find...
(pushes torch away)
...get that out of my face.

Childs grabs him by the collar and rips him off his chair.

CHILDS
Don't you be telling me....

Nauls steps between them.

NAULS
(to Childs)
Lighten your load, sucker. You ain't the judge and executioner around here!

CHILDS
Who you trying to protect, muther-fucker? I'm telling you this S.O.B. could be one of them.

Garry breaks it up, pulling them apart. MacReady enters from the outside. A bundle is tucked under his arm.

GARRY
Hold on, damn it. We're getting nowhere...If this bit of Blair's about absorbing and imitating is true...then that dog could have gotten to anybody.

DR. COPPER
And if it got to Clark...Clark could have gotten to anybody.

MacReady moves over to the table.

DR. COPPER
(continuing)
Theoretically any of us could be whatever the hell this thing is.

CONTINUED

149 CONTINUED - 2 149

Norris shakes his head, rubbing his chest in slight discomfort.

NORRIS
It's just too damn wild -- I can't believe it.

MacReady pushes his sombrero back over his head.

MAC READY
Well, you can believe it now.

He drops the bundle he had been holding on the table between the men. It is the shredded pair of long-johns Nauls had found in the kitchen trash earlier.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Nauls found this yesterday. It's ripped just like the clothing on the Norwegian we brought back. The same thing was happening to Bennings' clothes when it got to him. Seems these Things don't imitate clothes. Just flesh and bone.

The men look from one another. Silence. MacReady picks it up and examines the label.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Size large.
(grins)
What do you wear, Clark?

Clark stews.

CLARK
So what?

NORRIS
I wear a size large, too.

MAC READY
So do I. So do most of us.

The uneasiness in the room grows.

MAC READY
Doubt if it got to more than one or two of us. But it got to some-one.

CONTINUED

149 CONTINUED - 3 149

MAC READY (Cont'd)
(beat)
Somebody in this room ain't what he appears to be.

A pause as all eyes travel from man to man.

SANCHEZ
(scared)
Well, what we going to do?

Norris turns to Dr. Copper and Fuchs.

NORRIS
Can there be...some kind of test? ...To find out...who's what?

FUCHS
Well...microscopic examination of our tissue...But if Blair's right, it'd be too late for that.

DR. COPPER
It would have duplicated our cells perfectly by now.

FUCHS
I'm afraid so.

DR. COPPER
But wait a minute...This thing has got to have its own body chemistry -- or it would just become a dog and stay a dog and that would be the end of it.

FUCHS
A serum test?

DR. COPPER
Why not?

DR. COPPER
It's a simple blood typing test. This Thing's blood chemistry is different from ours. Basically we mix someone's blood with uncontaminated human blood. If we don't get the proper serum reaction -- then that person isn't human.

CONTINUED

149 CONTINUED - 4 149

CHILDS
Whose uncontaminated blood we going to use?

DR. COPPER
We've got blood plasma in storage.

GARRY
How long will it take you to prepare this?

DR. COPPER
A couple hours.

GARRY
Well, get to it.

Garry unhinges a key from his belt and hands it to Dr. Copper. Dr. Copper and Fuchs head for the infirmary.

PALMER
How'd that Thing get to the dogs? I thought we stopped it in time.

MAC READY
Copper thinks they swallowed pieces of it during the fight.

PALMER
And that was enough?

DR. COPPER (o.s.)
Garry. The rest of you! Come here!

150 INT. INFIRMARY 150

The men rush in. Fuchs and Copper stand by the open plasma storage refrigerator. The inside is a mess of dried blood. The bladders have been ripped open. Copper is ghastly pale.

DR. COPPER
(continuing)
Somebody got to the blood... sabotaged it.

NAULS
Oh, my God.

A horrified silence.

CONTINUED

150 CONTINUED 150

MAC READY
Was it broken into?

FUCHS
No. Somebody opened it. Closed it. And then locked it.

Sanchez twitches, terrified.

MAC READY
Well, who's got access to it?

DR. COPPER
I guess I'm the only one.

GARRY
And I've got the only key.

Several pairs of eyes turn to Garry.

MAC READY
Would that test have worked?

DR. COPPER
I think so.

NORRIS
Somebody else sure as hell thought so.

CHILDS
We're dealing with a pretty smart son of a bitch.

MAC READY
Who else could have used that key?

GARRY
Ah...no one...I give it to Copper when he needs it....

MAC READY
Could anyone have gotten it from you?

DR. COPPER
I don't see how...when I'm finished I return it right away.

NORRIS
When was the last time you used it?

CONTINUED

150 CONTINUED - 2 150

DR. COPPER
(uneasy)
A day or so ago...I guess.

Garry senses the nervous and inquiring eyes on him.

GARRY
I suppose...well, it's possible someone might have lifted it from me. But....

CHILDS
That key ring of yours is always hooked to your belt. Now how could somebody get to it without you knowing?

GARRY
(upset; flustered)
Look, I haven't been near that... that refrigerator.

Silence as the men continue to stare. Sanchez is perspiring.

GARRY
(continuing)
Copper's the only one who has any business with it.

The eyes shift from Garry to Copper.

DR. COPPER
Now...wait a second, Garry, you've been in here on several occasions....

FUCHS
And the Doc thought of the test.

CHILDS
(anger)
So what?! Is that supposed to leave him in the clear?! Bullshit!

Sanchez bolts out the door. Stunned for a beat, the others chase after him.

GARRY
Hey, Sanchez!

151 SANCHEZ 151

in terror, runs at top speed through the narrow corridors. Opening and shutting doors. The others are in pursuit. They shout for him to stop.

CUT TO

152 SANCHEZ 152

as he reaches a small armory. A glass case set into the wall. A half a dozen rarely used guns are inside. He tries the handle. Locked.

He hears the clamor of feet and voices as the others are nearing. He breaks the glass and grabs a shotgun. Then a box of shells. He frantically tries to load, but is too nervous.

The others arrive at the end of the hallway. Garry pulls his handgun and points.

GARRY
Put that down!

SANCHEZ
(trembling)
No.

GARRY
I'll put this right through your head.

No one doubts Garry's sincerity.

SANCHEZ
You guys going to let him give orders? I mean he could be one of those Things.

The others regard Garry tensely. No one oblivious to the fact that Sanchez just might be right.

MAC READY
(calm)
Put it away, Sanchez. Just put it away.

Still trembling, he tosses the shells back into the broken case, leans the gun against the wall and begins to sob. Nauls skates over to comfort him.

The men watch as Garry lowers his gun. He turns to them.

CONTINUED

152 CONTINUED 152

GARRY
I don't know about Copper. But I didn't go near that plasma...
(beat)
But I guess you'll all rest easier if someone else is in charge.

He hands his gun to Norris.

GARRY
(continuing)
Can't see anyone objecting to you, Norris.

NORRIS
Sorry, gentlemen...
(rubs chest)
...Don't think I'd be up to it. Haven't been feeling well lately.

Childs goes for the gun.

CHILDS
I'll take it....

MacReady beats him to it.

MAC READY
Maybe it should be someone a bit more even-tempered, Childs.

Childs glares.

MAC READY
(continuing; to others)
...Any objections?

Roving eyes pass about the hallway. Nobody is sure who to trust. MacReady seems as good as any.

153 INT. REC ROOM 153

The men have gathered to discuss plans. Furtive and untrustworthy glances are passed around the room.

MAC READY
...From what we know this Thing likes to go one on one. So we stick together as much as possible. In two's and three's.

CONTINUED

153 CONTINUED 153

Childs points to Garry, Dr. Copper and Clark.

CHILDS
What do we do about those three?

MAC READY
We got morphine, don't we?

Fuchs nods.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Well, we keep them loaded. Stash them here in the rec room and watch 'em twenty-four hours.

PALMER
(ears perk up)
Morphine? You know I was pretty close to that dog, too.

Palmer is ignored.

NORRIS
We should sleep in shifts.

MAC READY
Right. Half of us awake at all times.

SANCHEZ
How we going to try and find out who's...you know, who's who?

MAC READY
(to Fuchs)
Can you think of any other tests?

FUCHS
I'll try. I could sure use Copper's help though.

CHILDS
You can eighty-six that thought right now, man.

Dr. Copper eyes his accuser solemnly.

MAC READY
Also...When this Thing turns...it turns slowly at first. I think we

CONTINUED

153 CONTINUED - 2 153

MAC READY (Cont'd)
can handle it in that state. But if it ever got to full power...from what I saw of that Norwegian camp ...well, I just don't know...It would probably take it an hour or more to get like that. So no matter what anybody's doing, we all return to this room every twenty minutes. Anybody gone longer than that... anybody trying to leave...we kill 'em.

CUT TO

154 EXT. COMPOUND - DARKNESS 154

It is the dead of winter. Six months of darkness ahead. Palmer fights the cold as he works dismantling the engine of the helicopter.

He frowns, searching for something.

PALMER
(mumbles)
Where's that magneto? Can't find a darn thing around here any more.

155 INT. REC ROOM 155

Copper, Clark and Garry sit moodily together on a couch. Norris awkwardly prepares to give them their injections. He is new at this. Childs stands guard with his torch.

Dr. Copper offers to help.

DR. COPPER
I'll do it. You're going to break the needle in my arm.

CHILDS
No, Doc. He's doing a real fine job.

156 EXT. COMPOUND 156

MacReady and Sanchez are foraging through the trash dump.

MAC READY
Look for shoes, too. And burned cloth.

157 INT. RADIO ROOM 157

Norris has begun dismantling the radio. He rubs at his chest as he disengages the headset.

158 INT. HALLWAY 158

Following Nauls as he skates through the labyrinth. Checking waste bins. Pausing to look behind shelves and any obscure hiding place.

MacReady passes him coming the other way.

NAULS
That thing's too smart to be hiding any more of its clothes, MacReady.

MAC READY
Just keep looking.

159 INT. LAB 159

Fuchs is poring over a book. Several others lie open on his desk.

MacReady pokes his head in the lab.

MAC READY
How's it going?

FUCHS
Nothing yet. But, MacReady, I've been thinking...If our dogs changed by swallowing parts of that other one...We better see to it that everyone prepares their own food and we eat out of cans.

MAC READY
Gotchya.

160 EXT. COMPOUND 160

A siren goes of, signaling the end of a twenty-minute period. Sanchez pulls himself out of the trash dump.

Palmer carries a large part of a helicopter engine toward the compound.

161 INT. COMPOUND 161

The hallway near the supply storage cubicle. MacReady holds the door open as Palmer makes his way to him lugging the heavy helicopter part.

Childs passes by from the other direction.

PALMER
Childs, where's that magneto from Chopper One?

CHILDS
Ain't it there?

He passes by.

PALMER
No it ain't there. Would I be asking if it were there?

MAC READY
Move it, Palmer.

162 INT. SUPPLY STORAGE ROOM 162

Palmer sets down the heavy part. Norris follows him inside with a bundle of radio gear. They move back out into the hallway. MacReady locks the door behind them.

163 HALLWAY 163

The three move down the hall toward their appointed rendezvous at the rec room.

MAC READY
(to Palmer)
Start taking apart those snowmobiles next, huh?

164 INT. KITCHEN 164

Cramped. Several of the men are preparing their food. Opening cans. Heating them in pots.

165 EXT. COMPOUND 165

Nauls wearily approaches Blair's tool shed with a tray of food. He hears a pounding from within.

CONTINUED

165 CONTINUED 165

NAULS
I got your goodies, superdude.

He peeks in through the opening in the boarded-up window. Blair is nailing himself in from the inside. He looks pretty crazed.

NAULS
(continuing)
What you doin'?

BLAIR
Nobody's getting in here. You can tell them all that!

NAULS
Well, who the hell you think wants to get in there with you?

Nauls slides the tray in the slot. It is immediately shoved back out and topples onto the ice. Some of the food has splashed on Nauls' heavy coat.

NAULS
(continuing)
Now why'd you go and....

BLAIR
And I don't want any more food with sedatives in it. I know what you're up to. Don't think I don't. And if anyone tries to get in here -- I've got rope. I'll hang myself before it gets to me.

NAULS
You promise?
(picks up tray, heads back, mumbling)
Crazy white scientist motherfucker....

166 INT. REC ROOM 166

The entire group is present, eating their rather drab meal. The unease is constant. Dr. Copper watches the repast. Giddy from the morphine, he giggles.

Some of the men look his way. He giggles again.

CONTINUED

166 CONTINUED 166

CHILDS
What's with you?

DR. COPPER
Nothing. Just thoughts...thoughts.

MAC READY
Don't pay any attention.

A beat. Sanchez offers to no one in particular.

SANCHEZ
I was wondering...would we know if we were one of these Things?

DR. COPPER
Very good question.

MAC READY
(grim)
You'd know all right.

DR. COPPER
(slight giggle)
How can you be so sure?

MAC READY
Because it's not human.

DR. COPPER
Answer me this, gentlemen. If this thing had become one of us -- why would it send those poor doggies out? Strange logic.

NORRIS
Who says this thing is humanly logical.

MAC READY
Sounds logical enough to me. It's like a guy who goes to Vegas. He doesn't bank everything on blackjack. He plays a bit of everything. The dogs were a plan that didn't work.
(beat)
I'm sure it's got others.

CONTINUED

166 CONTINUED - 2 166

DR. COPPER
But if it's one of us -- why risk anything? Just sit pretty. No reason to attack anyone. Three or four months from now -- a sweet plane ride to civilization.

MAC READY
Because it knows we know about it. It knows that maybe we can detect it.
(adamantly to Fuchs)
Right?

Fuchs says nothing.

NORRIS
But he's right. If we can't detect it. We take it home with us.

DR. COPPER
(giggling again)
Do we? Do we unleash this Thing?

Garry, staring ahead, in a grim stupor:

GARRY
It won't get out of here.

PALMER
Why don't you two bozos lighten up?

MacReady stands.

MAC READY
Come on, we all got work to do.

CUT TO

167 EXT. COMPOUND 167

Palmer works on the snowmobile. Sanchez resumes searching through the trash.

168 INT. BALLOON TOWER 168

MacReady slashes into the huge uninflated weather balloons, rendering them useless. Tanks of helium and hydrogen are stacked nearby.

169 INT. KITCHEN 169

Nauls does the dishes. His cassette plays in the b.g.

170 INT. REC ROOM 170

Childs continues guarding the three men.

CLARK
Gotta go to the can, Childs.

Childs follows him to the other end of the room.

CHILDS
Be quick.

Clark walks to the head. Childs moves back to the middle of the room. As the guard he is much more vulnerable in this position. Being split between his prisoners.

The lights begin to flicker. The soft purr of the generator begins to fade.

CHILDS
(continuing)
Oh, no.

The lights go out. Nauls calls from the kitchen.

NAULS (o.s.)
Childs! That a fuse?

CHILDS
No. The generator. You got the auxiliary box just off the kitchen.
Get to it.
(fumbling around)
Where's the damn flashlight?
(calling out)
You fellas okay over there?

Dr. Copper giggles in the dark.

CHILDS
(continuing)
Cut that out, Copper.
(beat)
Nauls? What's taking you?!

CONTINUED

170 CONTINUED 170

NAULS (o.s.)
I'm working it! Nothing's happening!

CHILDS
That's impossible, man! Okay, Clark, out of the john where I can see you!

NAULS (o.s.)
It's shorted out or something!

CHILDS
(shouting)
Clark, you come on out here!!

Childs lights the tip of his torch, allowing him a strong candlelight. Garry is no longer in the room.

CHILDS
(continuing)
Where's...Where's Garry?

Dr. Copper looks numbly at the empty seat next to him. Childs finds the portable siren and blares it.

171 EXT. COMPOUND 171

MacReady, Palmer and Sanchez heed the call and head for the compound.

172 INT. REC ROOM 172

Childs jerks his head around in different directions.

CHILDS
Where are you, Garry? Don't you move an inch, Copper.
(shouts)
Nauls, bring me a goddamn flashlight!

173 INT. KITCHEN 173

Pitch black.

NAULS
Somebody's taken it. I can't find it!

CHILDS (o.s.)
Clark, you want me to come in after you?!

174 INT. HALLWAY 174

MacReady, Sanchez and Palmer come in from the outside. They bump into each other trying to get their bearings from the lack of light. Palmer, the only one who seems to have one, turns on his flashlight.

MAC READY
(shouting)
What's happened!?

NORRIS (o.s.)
MacReady, that you?

MAC READY
Yeah!

NORRIS (o.s.)
It's the generator I think! No power.

MAC READY
(to Palmer)
Well, let's get down there.

CHILDS (o.s.)
MacReady!

MAC READY
What?

CHILDS (o.s.)
Garry's missing!

MAC READY
(to self)
Oh, shit!
(shouts)
Well, hang on!

CHILDS (o.s.)
Gee, thanks!

175 INT. GENERATOR ROOM 175

Palmer and MacReady stumbling down the stairs. MacReady turns around, looks.

MAC READY
Where's Sanchez?

CONTINUED

175 CONTINUED 175

Both look around. Sanchez is gone. Palmer's light finds the motionless generator. He examines.

PALMER
The fuel pump...it's gone...
(frantic)
You've got to get up to supply, Mac. If we don't get this thing started soon, it'll freeze on us and we'll never get it going.

MacReady dashes upstairs into the darkness.

176 INT. HALLWAY 176

The lab door is opened. Fuchs holding a small candle walks out. As he passes, the shoulder of a man springs into frame.

177 INT. GENERATOR ROOM 177

Palmer is feverishly working underneath the generator on his back.

178 INT. REC ROOM 178

The temperature continues to drop rapidly. Childs swats himself to keep warm, while still keeping an eye on Dr. Copper and the rest of the room.

179 INT. HALLWAY 179

MacReady rushes out of the supply room, with a fuel pump, bumps into somebody.

MAC READY
Who...Who is that?

The silhouette moves on down the hallway.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Sanchez..? Hey, who....

PALMER (o.s.)
Mac, where the hell is that pump!!

CUT TO

180 INT. GENERATOR ROOM 180

MacReady holds the flashlight for Palmer. Their breath, puffs of white smoke.

PALMER
Somebody definitely messed with it.

MAC READY
We going to make it?

PALMER
Hope so. Another ten, fifteen minutes. What I don't get is....

The sound of a screeching. From somewhere in the compound. The two men's faces, locked in fear.

CUT TO

181 INT. REC ROOM 181

The generator has been repaired; the lights within the compound are back on.

Grim and tense. Everyone is present but Fuchs. Eyes flit from man to man. Palmer, Nauls and Sanchez are spread out about the room, keeping as much distance as possible from the rest.

Norris and Childs are tying the Doctor, Clark and Garry to the couch. MacReady prepares several makeshift blowtorches as he kneels on the ground.

SANCHEZ
Where were the flashlights?

MAC READY
Screw the flashlights. Where the hell were you?

PALMER
Tons of stuff's been missing around here. Magnetos, cables, wire....

NAUL
Kitchen things, too....

MAC READY
Anybody see Fuchs...or hear him? ...Huh?

CONTINUED

181 CONTINUED 181

No answer as the men's faces roam the room. Childs glares at Garry as he begins to tie him in.

CHILDS
Where'd you go?

Garry's groggy features stare blankly.

CHILDS
(continuing)
I said where? Where'd you go?!

GARRY
Was dark...find a light....

CHILDS
You lying bastard....

Garry struggles to his feet, affronted.

GARRY
(slurring)
I rather don't like your tone....

He grabs Childs by the collar.

CHILDS
You sit back down....

Childs whales on him with a right hand. Both go tumbling over the couch. MacReady and Norris dive in breaking it up.

NORRIS
Enough....

MacReady, furious, pulls Childs away.

MAC READY
Don't lose your head!!

Norris breathing heavily from the activity, massages his chest. The strong, stormy winds overhead batter the roofing. MacReady glances up. He and Childs release each other.

MAC READY
(continuing)
That storm's going to start ripping any minute -- so we don't have much time.

CONTINUED

181 CONTINUED - 2 181

He thrusts one of the blowtorches hard into Childs' stomach.

MAC READY
(continuing)
We've got to find Fuchs. When we find him -- we kill him.

SANCHEZ
Why?

MAC READY
If he's one of those Things, we've got to get to him before he changes ...Nauls, you and Childs and I'll check the outside shacks....

He tosses torches to Sanchez and Palmer.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Sanchez, you and Palmer search the inside....

PALMER
I ain't going with Sanchez.

Sanchez snaps his head toward Palmer. Palmer looks at the others.

PALMER
(continuing)
I ain't going with him. I'll go with Childs....

SANCHEZ
Well, screw you, man!

PALMER
I ain't going with you!

CHILDS
Well, who says I want you going with me?!

MAC READY
Cut the bullshit. We don't have the time!..Okay, Sanchez, you come with us. Norris...you stay here....

CONTINUED

181 CONTINUED - 3 181

MAC READY (Cont'd)
(refers to tied-up men)
Any of them move -- you fry 'em. And if you hear anything, anything at all you let loose the siren. We all meet back here in twenty minutes regardless.
(a beat)
And everybody watch whoever you're with. Real close.

The men survey each other.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Let's move.

CUT TO

182 EXT. COMPOUND - NIGHT 182

MacReady and Nauls, wearing their snowshoes and using flares for light, pull themselves along the steadying rope that leads to Blair's shed. They are careful to keep an eye on each other as they move along.

Sanchez heads off in the direction of another shack.

CUT TO

183 INT. COMPOUND - HALLWAY 183

One of the many doors creak open. Childs and Palmer stealthily move into the next corridor. Palmer falls a few steps behind, mumbling to himself.

PALMER
What'd we ever do to these Things anyway....

Childs freezes and snaps his head around facing Palmer. A beat.

PALMER
(continuing)
What?

CHILDS
Don't walk behind me.

CONTINUED

183 CONTINUED 183

Another beat.

PALMER
Right.

He moves to the other side of the wall, parallel with Childs. They continue on, skimming along the sides of the corridor in plain view of one another.

CUT TO

184 EXT. COMPOUND 184

Nauls and MacReady arrive at Blair's shack. They peer in through the spaces between the boards.

A weak light burns as Blair is seated eating out of a can. A hangman's noose dangles from the ceiling nearby.

MAC READY
Hey, Blair!!

Blair jumps in fear, spilling his can.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Has Fuchs been out here?

Blair approaches the boarded-up window. He looks haggard and afraid.

BLAIR
I've changed my mind...I'd...I'd like to come back inside...I don't want to stay out here any more... Funny things...I hear funny things out here.

MAC READY
Have you come across Fuchs?

BLAIR
Fuchs?..No, it's not Fuchs...You must let me back in...I won't harm anyone...I promise....

MAC READY
We'll see....

He and Nauls trudge off. Blair shouts after them.

CONTINUED

184 CONTINUED 184

BLAIR
I promise! I'm much better now! I'll be good!! I'm all better!! Don't leave me here!!

185 INT. REC ROOM 185

Norris continues his watch on the sedated trio. He anxiously tries to keep an eye on the various entrances behind and in front of him. He rubs his chest in pain.

DR. COPPER
I'm getting worred about you. You ought to have a checkup.

NORRIS
Let's just not get worried about anything just now.

DR. COPPER
(yawning)
After all this mess then.

NORRIS
(nodding)
After all this mess.

186 INT. HALLWAY 186

Sleeping cubicles on either side. Childs and Palmer move through slowly, checking each one. Palmer rambles on.

PALMER
...Wish I had more acid...only three tabs left...If I gave every-one acid...Now that'd be a test for you...Nothing but humans can handle LSD...blow their minds right out of their asses....

Childs grabs him and thrusts him against the wall.

CHILDS
Will you quit with your dumb yakkity-yak!

187 EXT. COMPOUND - THE SLOPE TO MAC READY'S SHACK 187

The winds are thick and vicious now. MacReady and Nauls pull themselves along the rope fighting their way up the slope. A violent gust sends MacReady's body horizontal, but still hanging onto the rope. The wind slaps him back down. His flare and torch tumble back toward Nauls. Nauls saves the torch from rolling down the hill.

MacReady, lying vulnerable, watches Nauls pull his way toward him. He tenses. Nauls reaches him. A beat. He hands him back his torch. Relieved, MacReady pulls himself upright.

188 INT. COMPOUND - KITCHEN - CLOSE ON THICK POWER CABLES 188

that line the wall. They have been torn apart. Childs and Palmer examine.

PALMER
Auxiliary light cables..? Been cut.

CHILDS
Cut, bullshit. Been pulled apart.

189 EXT. MAC READY'S SHACK 189

as they reach the top. The remaining flare their only light. Very dark. They stand on either side of the door. MacReady shoves it open. Pitch black inside. MacReady flips the light switch. Doesn't work.

190 INT. SHACK 190

They enter. Haunched. Torches ready. The place a mess. The winds as strong as on the outside.

The single flare illuminating the ceiling. Almost all of the corrugated, steel roofing is gone. As if ripped off.

NAULS
(shouting to be heard)
Where's the roof?!

MacReady stares up incredulous, as they advance through the room.

NAULS
(continuing)
This storm do that?

CONTINUED

190 CONTINUED 190

MAC READY
(shouting)
Couldn't be possible. Must have weighed a ton and a half....

Nauls kicks over a chair. A naked, fleshy object bounds high into the air. Nauls thrusts out his torch, catching the breasts of the inflatable woman. She pops and is sucked out through the hole in the roof.

Nauls tries to catch his breath.

NAULS
Goddamn white women.

191 INT. COMPOUND 191

Underground, rickety corridor. Palmer stands by as Childs undoes the many locks to the room that houses his plants. One by one. Palmer twists his head in every which direction. Nervous.

Childs pulls open the heavy door. A flush of snow and wind push them back. They wedge their bodies at the entrance to the lightless room.

CHILDS
My babies.

They enter. The light from the hall exposes the completely smashed-in window high above the plants. The plants look frozen.

PALMER
Somebody broke in.

CHILDS
Now who'd go and do....

Saddened, angry, Childs goes to check the damage to his plants. Palmer, his face set in horror, yanks him back.

PALMER
Childs!!

CHILDS
Let go me....

PALMER
Don't get near 'em. The plants! They're alive. Those Things can imitate anything....

CONTINUED

191 CONTINUED 191

CHILDS
What's it going to do, being a plant?

Palmer readies his small torch.

PALMER
We got to burn 'em.

CHILDS
Now hold on, you dumb....

Palmer sprays them with flame. Childs pushes him to the ground, and tries to swat out the fire.

CHILDS
(continuing)
You stupid, sonofa....

Palmer, his mouth agape with terror, screams and points to the closing door to their rear. Childs whirls.

192 FUCHS 192

One arm outstretched, swings into view. An ax, embedded deep into his chest, pins his frozen body to the inside of the door.

193 INT. REC ROOM 193

Norris startled by the scream, turns on the siren.

CUT TO

194 INT. PLANT ROOM 194

Sanchez has joined Childs and Palmer. The body of Fuchs is still pinned to the door. Sanchez tries to wrench the ax loose. It is too deeply embedded and won't budge.

SANCHEZ
Whoever put this through him....

Sanchez observes Childs' hulking frame and adds pointedly:

SANCHEZ
(continuing)
...is one bad-ass and strong muther.

CHILDS
No one's that strong, boy!

195 INT. PASSAGEWAY 195

Tracking with the three men. Opening and closing doors, as they make their way back to the rec room. They keep their distance from each other, watching each other while they walk.

PALMER
Why didn't it imitate Fuchs? Isn't that its number -- to get more recruits.

SANCHEZ
Wasn't enough time. Generator was out, what?..Thirty minutes. Takes the bastards an hour, maybe two to absorb somebody.

PALMER
Why Fuchs?

SANCHEZ
He was working on a test. Fuchs must have been onto something. These bastards got scared and got rid of him.

PALMER
You got some pretty smart answers all of a sudden for a guy who can't even fix his own radio.

SANCHEZ
All seems pretty obvious to me. Why ain't you coming up with the same answers?

CHILDS
Cool it, you two.

PALMER
What we going to do about a test now?

CHILDS
Only test I can think of is a bullet through somebody's brain. If they don't die -- they ain't real.

SANCHEZ
Would be kinda tough on us humans, Childs.

PALMER
(accusatory)
Us?

CONTINUED

195 CONTINUED 195

SANCHEZ
I want you off my case, Palmer, you hear....

CHILDS
End it, the both of you! You're making me uptight with your bullshit!

PALMER
We got to detoxify the Doc. Blair too. Got to get them working on a test. They're our only chance.

CHILDS
(suddenly realizing)
Hey...Where's Mac and Nauls?

196 INT. REC ROOM 196

They rush in. Norris still stands guard over Dr. Copper, Garry and Clark.

CHILDS
MacReady and Nauls back yet?

NORRIS
No.

CHILDS
(calling out)
MacReady!

Palmer moves to one of the doors and bellows down a passageway.

PALMER
Nauls!!

Nothing. Just the constant outside wind. Childs picks up the siren and lets it scream.

197 EXT. COMPOUND 197

A strong driftwind streams snow across the ground obscuring everything but the very top of the buildings.

198 INT. REC ROOM 198

Rigid, immobile faces. Listening to the storm overhead.

198 CONTINUED 198

CHILDS
How long they been out?

NORRIS
Thirty...Thirty-five minutes.

PALMER
Where'd you see them last?

SANCHEZ
They checked on Blair. Then went off to MacReady's shack.

Silence, as the uneasy eyes measure one another.

CHILDS
We better start closing off the outside hatchways.

199 VARIOUS ANGLES OF THE COMPOUND 199

Childs, Sanchez and Palmer -- closing off and bolting the entrances to the camp.

NORRIS (o.s.)
All of you! Come here!

200 INT. COMPOUND MAIN HALLWAY 200

201 POINT OF VIEW - THE MEN 201

Through the fogged-up windows, a figure can be seen approaching the main compound. It pulls and drags its way along the guide rope, fighting the gale force winds.

CUT TO

202 THE MEN 202

weapons in hand, huddle at the main doorway. They unbolt it. Sleet and hail send Nauls rolling in from the outside. The men force the door back and lock it.

The weary Nauls kneels on the floor and gasps for air. The others surround him.

CHILDS
Where you been?

CONTINUED

202 CONTINUED 202

NAULS
Vicious drift wind...even with the line...was being blown all over the place....

PALMER
Where's MacReady?

Nauls weighs each of them ominously, while digging down underneath his heavy jacket.

NAULS
Cut him loose of the line up by his shack.

CHILDS
Cut him loose?

NAULS
When we were up poking around his place...I found this....

He pulls out a thick bundle of heavy clothing. It is mutilated and partially burned. He holds out the jacket to show the inside collar.

Close on name tag -- It reads: R.J. MAC READY

The men, as they examine in a hush.

NAULS
...It was stashed in his old coal furnace...wind must have dislodged it...I don't think he saw me find it.

The men continue to examine in various states of disbelief.

NAULS
...Made sure I got ahead of him on the towline on the way back...cut him loose.

SANCHEZ
(incredulous)
MacReady...?

NAULS
He's one of them.

CONTINUED

202 CONTINUED - 2 202

SANCHEZ
(scared)
When do you think it got to him?

PALMER
Could have been anytime. Anywhere.

CHILDS
(to Nauls, suspicious)
If it did get to him.

NAULS
Look, man....

PALMER
...Yeah, pretty convenient time for you to find....

NORRIS
All right, now, calm down. Any of us could have planted that stuff up there....

NAULS
Well, it wasn't me....

CHILDS
No one's saying it was you -- yet!!

PALMER
When the lights went out....

CHILDS
Would have been a perfect time....

PALMER
Right. Garry was missing...
(pointedly)
...And Sanchez....

SANCHEZ
(goes for him)
Fuck you, Palmer.

Childs and Norris separate them.

NORRIS
Could have been any of us! Anytime!

SANCHEZ
(losing it)
You been outside more than anybody, Palmer...Way more than anybody....

CHILDS
Cut it!!

NORRIS
This is just what it wants...to pit us against each other.

CONTINUED

202 CONTINUED - 3 202

SANCHEZ
(trembling)
But I don't get it...wouldn't it want MacReady out of the way...? I mean we put him in charge.

NAULS
He put himself in charge. Remember?

A pounding at the door sends the men jerking backward. Nauls scampers to his feet. They tense.

MAC READY (o.s.)
Open up!

No answer as the men surround the door, their weapons ready. Fear.

MAC READY (o.s.)
...Hey, somebody! Open up, it's me, MacReady...
(still nothing)
...Come on damn it...The towline snapped. Been crawling around like a seal out here....

NAULS
(harsh whisper)
Bullshit! He's got to know damn well I cut it!

The men keep their voices low.

PALMER
Let's open.

CHILDS
Hell no.

More pounding.

SANCHEZ
(shaking)
You think he's changed into one of those Things?

NAULS
He hasn't had enough time.

CONTINUED

202 CONTINUED - 4 202

NORRIS
We don't know that for sure.

MAC READY (o.s.)
...I'm half frostbit.

SANCHEZ
Could he talk like a human?

CHILDS
Who knows? You really want to be finding out?

PALMER
(voice craking)
...Nothing human could have made it back here in this weather without a guide line....

MAC READY (o.s.)
...Where is everybody!?

PALMER
Let's open it now....

CHILDS
(edgy; venom)
Why you so damn anxious to let him in here....

PALMER
(slight trembling)
He's so close. Maybe our best chance to blow him away.

CHILDS
No. Just let him freeze out there.

SANCHEZ
What if we're wrong about him?

CHILDS
Then we're wrong.

The muffled breaking of a window down the hall. The men turn.

PALMER
The supply window!

CONTINUED

202 CONTINUED - 5 202

SANCHEZ
(terror)
What we going to....

NORRIS
All right...all right...we've got no choice now....

CHILDS
Quick, we got to get him while he's trapped. Norris, you and Nauls take the outside window. Rest of us -- the supply door.

NORRIS
(frantically pulling on heavy jacket)
Sanchez, you watch the other three!

Childs and Palmer sprint down the hall. Sanchez crosses into the rec room. Nauls and Norris unbolt the door. A beat as they give each other an untrustworthy look. The door is opened and they move out into the storm.

203 INT. SUPPLY ROOM 203

Pitch black. MacReady's voice is heard cursing as he appears to be stumbling around, looking for a light switch. He responds to the muffled voices at the door.

MAC READY
What's going on out there?

204 HALLWAY 204

Palmer stands by as Childs tries the knob. Locked.

CHILDS
Damnit, he's got the keys.

Childs rips a nearby fire ax off the wall and begins hacking away at the door.

205 INT. SUPPLY ROOM 205

MAC READY'S VOICE
What are you doing?

CONTINUED

205 CONTINUED 205

CHILDS (o.s.)
You're a dead man, MacReady -- or a dead whatever the hell you are!

MAC READY'S VOICE
What's the matter with you, man?! It's like hell out there. I got lost.

MacReady begins to rummage through the supplies in the darkness.

CHILDS (o.s.)
Forget it, baby, we found your clothes -- the ones you tried to burn.

MAC READY'S VOICE
What clothes?

CHILDS (o.s.)
You been made, MacReady.

Childs chops away. MacReady desperately continues rummaging through the supplies.

MAC READY'S VOICE
Someone's trying to mark me, you bastard...trying to frame me.

206 HALLWAY 206

Childs cautions to Palmer as he prepares for one last blow.

CHILDS
Move in slow now.

Crunch. The door gives. The men move in. Their blow torches ready. They freeze.

MacReady stands before them holding a lighted flare. His hair and clothing are covered with snow; his cheeks and nose blackened by frostbite. Tucked under his arm is an entire box of dynamite. He holds the flare dangerously close to the open box.

MAC READY
Anyone messes with me -- the whole camp goes.

CONTINUED

206 CONTINUED 206

He appears to mean it. They don't seem anxious to test him.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Put those torches on the floor and back off.

They do. He follows them out into the hall.

207 HALLWAY 207

The men step backwards carefully.

MAC READY
...back way off.

They heed, retreating further down the hall. MacReady glances behind him.

MAC READY
(continuing)
...Where's the rest....

Nauls and Norris, who have silently crept in through the supply window, come flying through the hacked-up door and barrel into MacReady. Both going straight for the flare.

MacReady spins Nauls off and rips into Norris, sending him crashing violently into the wall. Nauls tackles MacReady's legs, pulling him to the floor.

The others rush him. MacReady, still in control of the dynamite and flare, bellows:

MAC READY
(continuing)
So help me I mean it!!

They skid to a halt. Nauls crawls away, quickly.

NAULS
It's cool, man. We ain't near you, man...Stay cool....

PALMER
Yeah, man, really. Just relax.

CONTINUED

207 CONTINUED 207

MAC READY
I mean it. Anybody touches me... we go.

Norris, lying on the floor, coughs as if gasping for breath. He quivers for a moment and then is still. Nauls crawls over to him and shakes him. A beat.

NAULS
I don't think he's breathing.

Nauls listens to Norris's chest. MacReady stands.

MAC READY
Go untie the Doc. Get him in here. Bring the others, too...
(grins menacingly)
...No one gets out of my sight from now on.

CUT TO

208 HALLWAY - CLOSE ON DR. COPPER'S FISTS 208

as he pounds on Norris' inert chest.

Pull back. Copper's movements and speech are still slightly impaired by the morphine. MacReady holds the rest of them at bay with the large torch while he wraps bundles of dynamite around his waist and chest with electrical tape.

DR. COPPER
How long's he been out?

CHILDS
Three...four minutes.

DR. COPPER
Help me get him to the infirmary.

CUT TO

209 HALLWAY 209

The men, bunched very close together, carry Norris. MacReady follows a safe distance behind. He looks a bit mad, having taped the bundles of dynamite to his chest and waist.

CONTINUED

209 CONTINUED 209

MAC READY
That's it, boys...Everybody stay real close to each other.

210 INT. INFIRMARY 210

Norris' body is plopped on the examination table. Copper stumbles and is steadied by some of the men. MacReady continues to keep his distance.

Copper places an oxygen mask over Norris' face. He then rips open his shirt.

MAC READY
So you sweethearts had yourselves a little trial. I just may have to kill you on general principle, Nauls.

Copper beings swathing Norris' chest with a gelatin substance.

MAC READY
(continuing)
...Ever occur to the jury that anybody could have gotten to some of my clothes and stuck them up....

CHILDS
We ain't buying that.

MAC READY
Well, I don't give a shit what you're buying today, big fella. But all you bastards, human or inhuman, are going to have to watch me now.

DR. COPPER
Dammit, quit the bickering and give me a hand. Wheel that fibrillator over here.

Sanchez pushes over the portable fibrillator. Copper climbs up on the table and straddles Norris' chest. Unnoticed, Clark paws the contents of the instrument tray behind his back.

DR. COPPER
Palmer, turn on that oxygen and hold the mask over his face... Childs, grab his shoulders.

CONTINUED

210 CONTINUED 210

They do so. Copper holds electrical prongs over Norris' chest.

CHILDS
(to MacReady, threatening)
You're going to have to sleep some-time.

DR. COPPER
Quiet down...
(to Sanchez)
...turn that thing on.

Sanchez depresses the "on" button.

DR. COPPER
(continuing)
Now hold him.

MAC READY
I'm a real light sleeper, Childs....

DR. COPPER
Enough, MacReady!

Dr. Copper presses the prongs onto Norris' chest and shoots a bolt of current. Norris' body heaves upward. A slight crackling sound and an odd chirp through the oxygen mask.

DR. COPPER
(continuing)
Again...More current this time, Sanchez....

Buzzzz. Several more jolts from the prongs. Clark's hand has found a scalpel. He gently lifts it out, bringing it to his side.

MAC READY
And if anyone tries to wake me....

DR. COPPER
Damn you, MacReady!

CONTINUED

210 CONTINUED - 2 210

Norris' body begins bounding up. More crackling and popping. His chest begins to break up and spread. The mask pops off -- a hideous mewing escaping from Norris' distorted mouth.

The men jump back, incredulous. Dr. Copper scrambles off his chest and flops to the floor.

SANCHEZ
God...what...?

They watch on in stunned horror as The Thing that was Norris begins to change, to spread awkwardly on the slab. Its clothes tearing. A shoe splits in half and falls to the floor, exposing the beginnings of a talon.

MacReady charges toward it, shooing the men off.

MAC READY
Get out of the way!!

He onloads with a stream of flame. The body writhes in pain, belching and hissing. The slab catches fire. It struggles, lunges for floor, straightens up, and moves a few feet.

A black and yellow substances rips through its trousers and squirts to the floor. Norris' body collapses on the fibrillating machine in flame. Extinguishers are ripped from the walls and put to work.

MacReady watches the smoking particles of ooze in fascination, as they twitch and mew on the floor.

Within seconds the fire is out. The men stand around in awe as they look upon The Thing that was once Norris.

MacReady continues to observe the small particles. Their tiny squeals abating into silence.

211 INT. REC ROOM 211

MacReady, still carrying the industrial torch, has maneuvered all the men into the room. He holds Garry's .44. He has untaped the explosives from his chest and laid them on the nearby table next to two more boxes of dynamite.

CONTINUED

211 CONTINUED 211

CLARK
What you got in mind, MacReady?

MAC READY
A little test.

PALMER
What kind of test?

MAC READY
I'm sure a lot of you already know.

He tosses a ream of steel cable and some rope to Palmer.

MAC READY
Palmer, you and Copper tie every-one down. Real tight.

CHILDS
What for?

MAC READY
For your health.

GARRY
(to others)
Let's rush him. He's not going to blow us all up.

MAC READY
Damn if I won't.

CHILDS
(a beat)
You ain't tying me up.

MAC READY
Then I'll have to kill you.

CHILDS
Then kill me.

MacReady points the .44 at Childs' head.

MAC READY
I mean it.

MacReady cocks his gun. Childs holds his ground.

CHILDS
I guess you do.

CONTINUED

211 CONTINUED - 2 211

A beat. Clark springs for MacReady. Scalpel raised.

MacReady spins and fires three shots, point blank, the force of the charges sending Clark flying backwards. The others, themselves about to pounce, stop -- as MacReady whirls the torch and gun back toward them.

CUT TO

212 THE MEN 212

being tied securely to couches and chairs.

MAC READY
Tie up Clark, too.

PALMER
(bemused)
He's dead.

MAC READY
Norris looked pretty dead, himself. Bullets don't kill these Things.

MacReady turns on a Bunsen burner while he cuts the rubber covering off an electrical cord, exposing the copper wire. All the while, he keeps his eyes on the men.

CHILDS
(muttering)
We should have jumped his ass.

MAC READY
Now Copper, you tie Palmer up.

Copper starts to tie Palmer to the small couch next to Childs and Garry.

SANCHEZ
What are you going to do now?

MAC READY
We're going to draw a little bit of everybody's blood.

NAULS
What are you going to do? Drink it?

CONTINUED

212 CONTINUED 212

MAC READY
Watching Norris in there...Gave me the idea that maybe every part of you bastards is a whole. Every piece of you is self-sufficient, an animal unto itself. When a man bleeds it's just tissue. But blood from one of you Things won't obey. It's a newly formed individual with a built-in desire to protect its own life. When attacked your blood will try and survive -- and crawl away from a hot needle say.

CUT TO

213 SANCHEZ 213

grimacing as Dr. Copper pinches a scalpel to his thumb and collects a small portion of his blood in a dish.

All the men have been tied up. Palmer, Childs and Garry on the small couch. The others, including the lifeless corpse of Clark, in chairs.

Copper returns the plate to the table and sets it down in line with the other plates of blood that he has collected. The names of each man have been scribbled onto the plates. MacReady slides the Doctor a fresh plate.

MAC READY
Now you.

Copper cuts his thumb, his blood dribbles into the plate. He stands nervously for a beat.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Slide it back here.

Copper pushes it toward MacReady.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Now step way back.

Copper steps backward, moisture beginning to collect on his brow. MacReady begins to heat the copper wire over the Bunsen burner.

CONTINUED

213 CONTINUED 213

MAC READY
(continuing)
Let me remind everybody if I'm right about this test -- these things are going to get real mean. I don't know how many of you aren't human...But I'm warning you right now -- if things get out of hand -- nobody's going to get meaner than me. I guarantee not one of you bastards are leaving here alive.

The men watch intently. The wire begins to glow. MacReady points the torch directly at the Doctor. Both of them perspiring. MacReady lifts the glowing wire from the flame. The Doctor is dead still. MacReady slowly torches the wire to the Doctor's plate. A soft hiss.

MacReady heats it again and tries once more. The same soft hiss. MacReady and the Doctor both let out a sigh.

MAC READY
(continuing)
I guess you're okay.

DR. COPPER
(shaken; facetious)
Thank you.

MAC READY
Didn't think you'd use that fibrillator on Norris if you were one of them.

He hands Copper the torch.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Watch them.

He cuts himself with the scalpel and begins collecting his own blood.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Now I'll show you what I already know.

He heats the wire and puts it to his plate. The same harmless hissing. All eyes continue to watch as he tries again. The same result. Childs mumbles.

CONTINUED

213 CONTINUED - 2 213

CHILDS
Load of bullshit.

MAC READY
We'll see. Let's try Clark.

He heats the wire and lays it in Clark's dish. The hissing.

CHILDS
So Clark was human, huh?

MacReady nods.

CHILDS
(continuing)
So that makes you a murderer.

MacReady glances over the group.

MAC READY
Palmer now.

He sets Palmer's plate in front of him and heats the wire.

GARRY
Pure nonsense. This won't prove a damn thing.

MAC READY
Thought you'd feel that way, Garry. You were the only one who could have gotten to that blood plasma...
(placing the wire in Palmer's dish)
...we'll do you last....

Screech!!! The blood howls, trying to crawl off the plate.

Palmer bolts forward with incredible force, racing for MacReady; his face splitting; his mouth roaring -- dragging the couch, Childs and Garry with him. He smashes into MacReady knocking him over the table.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Copper!!

CONTINUED

213 CONTINUED - 3 213

It's all happened too fast. Copper tries to get off a burst of flame. The ever-changing Palmer breaks his bonds and leaps on the Doctor.

The others sit helpless, struggling at their bindings.

MacReady dives on Palmer's back and the three go rolling to the floor. Screeching. Crackling. MacReady pounds viciously at Palmer's head. A powerful, shirt-splitting arm sends him skidding across the floor.

Copper momentarily has control of the torch. Just as he positions it, Palmer's mouth splits from his chin to his forehead and engulfs the entirety of the Doctor's head.

The big torch slaps against the wall. Palmer bounds to his feet, wrapping his arms around the dangling, struggling body of Dr. Copper.

The men are screaming hysterically. MacReady tries to fire up the bruised torch. Busted. Won't work. Frustrated, he charges up behind Palmer and begins hammering the thick steel instrument over his head.

The shirt on Palmer's back erupts in MacReady's face. Splitting and ripping wildly, exposing the beginnings of yet another orifice. A blackened, iron strong tongue lunges outward. Stunned, MacReady manages to elude it, diving for the top of the table by the boxes of dynamite.

MacReady lights the fuse of a thick roll and bounds from the table. Palmer awkwardly spins in circles, swinging the Doctor's body like a propeller blade, struggling to keep on balance, as he advances on MacReady. The second orifice, spitting and snarling as it continues to take form.

MacReady waits until Palmer's back spins around, facing him. Only two yards away, MacReady flings his lit roll into the ever-evolving second mouth and leaps onto the couch covering Childs and Garry with his body.

A muffled boom, as the swallowed explosive ignites from deep within Palmer and sends his flesh splattering all over the room. MacReady rolls away from Childs and Garry as fast as he can.

CUT TO

214 MAC READY 214

perspiring profusely, his hand trembling slightly, prepares to continue the test. He heats the wire.

The men are pouring sweat, white-knuckled.

One of the smaller torches is pointed at Nauls. He closes his eyes. MacReady places the heated wire into his plate. Hiss. MacReady exhales. Nauls opens his eyes.

215 MAC READY 215

unties Nauls with one hand, while the torch stays glued to the others.

216 MAC READY 216

heats the wire once again. Both he and Nauls have torches aimed at Sanchez. Sanchez is near tears.

The wire is dipped into the plate...Hisssss.

Sanchez breaks down and sobs.

217 CHILDS 217

sits stoicly, while he watches the preparations for his turn.

CHILDS
Let's do it, Bwana.

Nauls and Sanchez take aim five yards away. Fierce, determined. The wire comes off the flame into the plate...the harmless hissing.

The muscles in Childs' face melt into a sigh.

CHILDS
(continuing)
Muthafu....

218 ALL EYES 218

snap towards station manager Garry. Childs, suddenly realizing who he is sitting next to, squirms.

CONTINUED

218 CONTINUED 218

CHILDS
Get me...get me the hell away from... cut me loose, damn it!

Nauls rips away his bindings. The other two stand guard. Childs scrambles off the couch and onto the floor.

219 GARRY 219

stares grimly ahead. Childs soaks his clothing with a can of gasoline. He is then surrounded. The room tenses, adrenalin pumps, breathing halts.

The burner. The torches. The wire. The plate. Garry's face.

Hisssss.

MacReady tries it again. Hiss. The men breathe. Their torches are lowered. Nauls throws his on the floor. Sanchez and Childs flop down in chairs. MacReady wipes his face.

A long silence. Sanchez weeps quietly with relief.

GARRY
I know you gentlemen have been through a lot. But when you find the time...I'd rather not spend the rest of the winter tied to this couch.

A beat. Childs starts to giggle. The strain on MacReady's jaw begins to lesson. Garry sits catatonic. Nauls scowls at Childs' uncontrollable laughter.

The infectious rasping causes MacReady a slight smile as he looks up, taking comfort in the sound of the raging antartic wind vibrating the roof. Nauls, untying Garry, grumbles, at Childs.

NAULS
Shut the damn hell up.

Childs wipes his eyes and grins over toward MacReady. His smile faded, MacReady is now stone face. Childs' grin goes stale, in sudden realization.

MAC READY
(almost a whisper)
Blair....

220 EXT. COMPOUND - NIGHT 220

The wind rumbles. The storm is at its peak. MacReady, Childs and Nauls, guided by their flares, pull themselves along the steadying rope, headed for Blair's shack.

221 BLAIR'S SHACK 221

The door is wide open. They pause by the entrance, trying to balance against the wind. They enter.

222 INT. BLAIR'S SHACK 222

Empty. A few of the floorboards are loosened. They pull them up. They stare down into a large hole beneath the planking. Something is down there. They pull up more boards.

The hole is some fifteen feet deep. Its dimensions are the same as the shack. Its space is almost completely taken up by some strange metallic object.

Crudely fashioned, a patchwork job, but streamlined. Sheets of corrugated steel are visible; but cut apart and welded into the desired shapes. The object appears to be unfinished.

NAULS
What is it?

MAC READY
Everything that's been missing.

CHILDS
Spaceship of some kind.

MAC READY
Smart s.o.b. He put it together piece by piece.

NAULS
Where was he trying to go?

MAC READY
Anyplace but there.

MacReady pulls out a dozen tightly wrapped sticks of dynamite.

CONTINUED

222 CONTINUED 222

MAC READY
(continuing)
But he ain't going to make it.

Far off, amidst the howling gale -- the screeching. The men jump. MacReady lights the fuse, as they make it to the exit. He tosses it in.

223 EXT. COMPOUND ALONG THE ROPE 223

The explosion echoes behind them. The men pull along. Their heads jerk in circles, searching into the blackness.

Some twenty yards to their rear something swooshes down, severing the line. The wind sends the men tumbling along the ice. Childs loosens the line and is blown away, rolling out of sight.

MacReady and Nauls have lost their torches. They pull feverishly along the ground trying to make it to the compound.

The screeching closes in behind them. MacReady loses his grip on the rope and is blown toward the main building. He crawls along looking for an opening.

Nauls slides near the outside entrance to the dog kennel. He climbs down through the open stairwell.

224 INT. PLANT ROOM 224

MacReady has found the broken window. He rolls through it, landing on the frozen plants below. Something smashes at the glass above his head, trying to get in. He sprints for the door. Fuchs' frozen body is still pinned to it with the ax. MacReady grapples with the stiff torso which blocks the knob.

He finally gets it open and lets himself out, slamming and locking the door from the hall. Fuchs' body swings eerily, back and forth.

225 INT. KENNEL TUNNEL 225

Nauls rips off his awkward snowshoes and races down the tunnel.

226 INT. HALLWAY 226

MacReady charges up the stairs from the plant room. He zooms down the twisting corridors, opening and closing doors. He rounds a bend and crashes into Nauls coming the other way.

CUT TO

227 INT. REC ROOM - CLOSE ON SANCHEZ 227

pouring gasoline into empty bottles, preparing Molotov cocktails.

Garry is connecting an electrical device: wires attached to two portable generators. MacReady appears to be injecting something into empty Contact capsules. The men work feverishly.

Nauls rushes in with another box of dynamite.

NAULS
What about Childs?

MAC READY
Forget about Childs. He's over.

Nauls begins cutting the wicks off the dynamite.

GARRY
Make 'em short. They'll go off quicker if we need to use them.

The wind belts into the roofing overhead. Garry sets the wiring to the main doorway. MacReady begins blocking off one of the other entrances with a large computer.

SANCHEZ
What if it doesn't come?

MAC READY
It'll come. It needs us. We're the only thing left to imitate...
(to Sanchez)
Give me a hand.

They block off a door with two heavy electrical games.

CONTINUED

227 CONTINUED 227

MAC READY
(continuing;
to Sanchez)
You and Nauls got to block off the west side bunks, the mess hall and the kitchen.

NAULS
(protest)
You crazy? He might be inside already!

MAC READY
Chance we got to take. We got to force him to come down the east side to the door we got rigged.

Nauls starts lacing his skates.

SANCHEZ
He might just wait us out.

MAC READY
I'm going to blow the generator when you get back. He'll have to come for us -- or freeze.
(further barricades the door with small couch)
We've got portable heaters -- we'll last longer.

Sanchez and Nauls start to leave.

MAC READY
(continuing)
...Hold it.

He dispenses the capsules.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Sodium cyanide. We place them between our cheeks and gums... This Thing can't imitate anything that's dead.

CONTINUED

227 CONTINUED - 2 227

A grim silence.

MAC READY
If it gets a hold of you -- bite down...They're supposed to be fast and painless...Now move.

CUT TO

228 INT. CORRIDOR 228

Sanchez and Nauls inch their way through.

229 INT. REC ROOM 229

MacReady rips linen, soaks the strips in gas, and stuffs them in the Molotov bottles. Garry tests the current on the door. Popping, sparks, smoke.

MAC READY
Looks good.

GARRY
One thousand volts. Should be enough.

230 INT. KITCHEN 230

Nauls pushes a stove, reinforcing a locked door. Five yards away, Sanchez maneuvers the refrigerator in front of another outlet.

Sanchez hears a quiet purring, bubbling sound. He turns to Nauls.

SANCHEZ
You hear that?

NAULS
Hear what?

A blaring. They whip their attention to stereo speakers on either side of the kitchen. Rock music screams out. Top volume.

231 INT. REC ROOM 231

The same loud music. MacReady and Garry look to the three speakers attached to the walls. MacReady yells his incomprehension to Garry. Garry tries to respond. Their voices drowned out.

232 INT. HALLWAY 232

Empty. Another of the stereo speakers that line the walls, thunders.

233 INT. KITCHEN 233

Nauls, in sudden realization, screams over the din and points back in the direction they came.

NAULS
It's got into the pub! It's turned on the stereo!

SANCHEZ
What!?

NAULS
It's in between us and them!! How we going to get back?!!

SANCHEZ
Can't hear you!

234 INT. REC ROOM 234

MacReady, cursing, rips the speakers off the wall.

MAC READY
What are they doing out there?!

The music is now subdued within the room, but continues booming throughout the camp. Nauls' scream can be barely heard.

GARRY
What's he saying?

235 INT. KITCHEN - NAULS 235

at the top of his lungs....

NAULS
MacReady! We been cut off!!

CONTINUED

235 CONTINUED 235

A sharp, red, talon-like fingernail, pierces the top of the door above Nauls' head. It saws downward, quickly. Black goo drips through the slit. The sawing obscured by the music.

Sanchez, eyes bulging, points. Nauls turns. A claw rips through the wood. Nauls dives to the floor.

In the opposite direction, behind Sanchez, another arm splits through the door and the refrigerator, extends itself five feet and yanks Sanchez back as if he were a puppet.

Sanchez struggles, looking imploringly at Nauls. He bites down on his capsule. Nauls takes off like a speed skater.

236 INT. REC ROOM 236

The sound of the screeching over the music.

MAC READY
Got to get to the generator.

He opens the door. Looks down the hall. No one. The speakers -- blaring music.

237 NAULS 237

Full speed down the maze. Left. Right. Totally reckless. He hits a straighaway.

238 SANCHEZ'S BODY 238

from out of nowhere, blasts through the hallway wall, directly in Nauls' path. A thick arm pins the body to the other side. Unable to stop, Nauls skids out of control, banging into the sides of the wall, his cyanide capsule flying out of his mouth.

Whatever the rest of it is, it starts to crumble through the wall. Nauls dives over the arm, somersaults to his feet and takes off.

239 INT. MAIN HALL 239

MacReady, running, spots Nauls careening out of a turn, heading toward him.

CONTINUED

239 CONTINUED 239

NAULS
Get back!!

MAC READY
The generator!

NAULS
Screw the generator!!

Nauls blazes by him. MacReady hears the snarls and screeches heading his way. He streaks after Nauls.

240 INT. REC ROOM 240

They make it in. Lock the door...MacReady tries to catch his breath. Nauls shakes, pants.

NAULS
Got Sanchez...Baddest dude I've ever seen...World War Three wouldn't mess with this fucker...Can go through walls...And it's like all over the place....

MAC READY
Calm down and get in your position.

NAULS
Position, my ass....

Garry fiddles with the two generators.

GARRY
I'm going to bump this up, much as I can.

NAULS
Boulder Dam might do it.

The loud music in the compound is turned off. MacReady shuts off the lights. The men spread out. Silence.

CUT TO

241 INT. REC ROOM 241

The men watch all the doors. Dead silence. Dark. Whispers.

CONTINUED

241 CONTINUED 241

GARRY
How long's it been?

MAC READY
Little over two hours.

NAULS
Maybe it ain't coming.

MAC READY
Then we go after him.

NAULS
Bet the last place you ever go.

The sound of a door opening and closing. Far off. Another creaking door is opened. A rustling. Still far off. MacReady and Nauls spread further apart.

The soft bubbling, cooling sound. A slight scratch at the door. Garry's hand tightens around the generator switches. The scratching gets more pronounced. MacReady cautions Garry with a whisper.

MAC READY
Wait....

The door begins to pound from the outside. Nauls and MacReady light two cocktails each.

The door booms. The room's foundations shake. The ceiling quivers. The gas bombs are cocked.

FROM THE ROOF The Thing roars down into their midst. Stunned, the men stumble back. MacReady throws his gas bomb. Nauls' the same.

For a moment it stands silhouetted in flame. Its enormous head rearing back in a howl. Nine feet tall. Four arms. Fanged.

Garry bolts for the main door. The Thing's tongue spirals from his mouth and spears him. The good two-thirds of its body follows its tongue and engulfs Garry by the door.

CONTINUED

241 CONTINUED - 2 241

Another leg slaps Nauls to the ground. MacReady dodges still another appendage, dives on the generators and throws the switch.

The current rips through the door. Garry dies instantly.

One of The Thing's talons, still caught in the door, sends it writhing in pain. It literally rips the door from its latchings and pounds it to the ground, trying to shake it loose. Nauls, hobbles, scrambles, out of the opening.

MacReady dives through the window and out into the storm.

CUT TO

242 INT. COMPOUND - HALL 242

the distant sound of a motor. Nauls, battered and bloodied, his leg apparently broken, crawls along the ground. Another sound, a bubbling and gurgling is heard well to his rear. But closing.

The terror forces him to drag faster, oblivious to the pain.

He reaches the bathroom stall. Crawls in. Locks it. The gurgling nears. Leaning on the toilet seat, he looks about himself, frantically.

The Presence pauses at the door. A scratching. Nauls' paws, rips at a cracked and weathered slab of wood, cutting his fingers as he tries to break it off the siding.

A strong blow begins to breach the stall door. Nauls finally unhinges the piece of wood, brings the jagged end to one side of his throat and rips....

243 INT. LAB WALL 243

The motorized rumbling nears. The wall seems to explode. The tractor barrels into the lab. Its enormous shovel scooper tearing half the room to shreds.

MacReady drives. His eyes glint like a wild man's; he looks stark raving mad.

CONTINUED

243 CONTINUED 243

His frostbite, now in an advanced stage, resembles black war paint. He clenches a stick of dynamite between his teeth, like a buccaneer's cutlass. Two large, compressed air tanks have been tied together at the top and are draped around his neck. They are marked -- HYDROGEN. They are used for the weather balloons.

He pulls the tractor to a stop, yanks the stick from his mouth, grins and bellows.

MAC READY
Okay, creep! Just you and me now! Be on your toes! We're going to do a little remodeling!

MacReady guns it through the next wall and into the infirmary. Medical equipment goes flying. The machine is powerful; the prefabricated walls buckling under its force.

244 INT. COMPOUND 244

A trail of viscous yellow ooze leads around a bend.

Boom.

MacReady rams into the mess hall, sweeping away tables, chairs. He sings out loud the lyrics of some Mexican song. All the while he keeps his eyes on everything.

Through the kitchen. The foundation crumbling. He sings on.

245 NARROW PASSAGEWAY 245

Gurgling and hissing. A taloned arm slinks around a corner in retreat.

MAC READY (v.o.)
Chime in if you know the words, old boy.

246 MAC READY 246

plows through several more rooms before ending up in the pub area. He backs it up and retrieves a bottle of liquor from the bar.

CONTINUED

246 CONTINUED 246

MAC READY
You like whiskey? Come on, join me for a drink. Be good for you. Grow fangs on your chest.

He takes a drink and rams through another wall.

247 INT. REC ROOM 247

The tractor blazes into the rec room. MacReady parks it directly in front of the hole in the roof, created by The Thing when it surprised them earlier.

MAC READY
Damn it, ran out of gas.

He pulls off the heavy hydrogen tanks and drapes them over the tractor. As he talks his eyes move like a hawk passing from roof, to doorways, to rubble.

Wind and ice bristle through the gaping holes, stinging MacReady with the cold. He winces at his mittenless, blackened fingers.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Sweetheart, it's going to get mighty cold in here soon...You better make your move...I mean, hell, I'm only one person....

He takes a swig from his bottle.

MAC READY
(continuing)
I know you're bugged because we ruined your trip, right? Spiffy little toy you had there.

A slight tremor perks his eyes and ears. He looks up through the hole, then around. He lights a lighter and cups it in his hand near the stick of dynamite in his lap.

MAC READY
(continuing)
But your real hang up is your looks....

A stronger tremor. The adrenalin pumps.

CONTINUED

247 CONTINUED 247

MAC READY
(continuing;
wants him bad)
Atta boy. I know you're around.

The floor shakes. MacReady stands, his head whirling around the room.

MAC READY
(continuing)
Come on, sucker.

The tractor inches up off the ground. MacReady falls forward and looks straight down through the chassis and into the vile and grinning face below. A claw flashes up, splitting the steering wheel but missing his face.

He depresses the ignition, bolting the tractor forward ten feet. He jumps, hanging onto the edge of the hole in the ceiling. The Thing's face and arms burst through the metal plating of the tractor. The reaching claws just miss him as he pulls himself through.

248 EXT. ROOF 248

He lights his fuse, drops in the stick, turns and runs.

Half of The Thing's grotesque and angular torso bolts up through the hole, howling in fury. An appendage springs outward and winds around MacReady's jacket, hissing like acid into the fabric.

An immense explosion. The hydrogen tanks send a white fireball fifty feet into the sky. The Thing's body disintegrating almost immediately.

The force of the blast sweeps MacReady off the roof. He and the severed appendage crash to the hard ice in flames. He rolls over and over trying to smother the fire and tear off the insidious limb.

CUT TO

249 INT. CAMP 249

A ruin. One half of it burnt almost to the ground. MacReady wears a thick blanket which covers him like a shroud, from his shoulders to the floor.

CONTINUED

249 CONTINUED 249

He walks bent over and in much pain, trying to blunt patches of fire with an extinguisher. It is futile. He gives up.

CUT TO

250 INT. PUB AREA 250

Mostly untouched by the fire, but like most of the rest of the camp, exposed to the outside. The storm has settled considerably.

251 CLOSE ON MAC READY 251

lighting a cigar. His hands are heavily wrapped. He pours himself a drink.

A puffy white hand, missing two fingers, enters the frame and whirls a startled MacReady around. It is Childs.

White and black blotches cover his frostbitten face.

CHILDS
Did you kill it?

He looks as weak as MacReady. A beat.

MAC READY
I think so.

CHILDS
What do you mean 'you think so?'

Both men speak guardedly and stare at each other suspiciously.

MAC READY
Yeah. I got it.
(refers to
Childs' condition)
Pretty mean frostbite.

Childs steps back, keeping his distance. He indicates his puffy white hand.

CHILDS
It'll turn black again soon enough.
Then I guess I'll be losing the
whole thing...
(refers to feet)
...Think my toes are already gone.

CONTINUED

251 CONTINUED 251

MacReady, carrying the bottle and glass, limps over and sits down behind a gaming table. There is a chess set and several decks of cards. The two men continue to eye each other.

CHILDS
(continuing)
So you're the only one who made it.

MacReady begins setting up a nonelectronic chessboard.

MAC READY
Not the only one.

CHILDS
The fire's got the temperature way up all over camp...won't last long though.

MAC READY
Neither will we.

CHILDS
Maybe we should try and fix the radio...try and get some help.

MAC READY
Maybe we shouldn't.

CHILDS
Then we'll never make it.

MacReady puffs on his cigar. He relieves a small blowtorch from under the table and places it beside him on top.

MAC READY
Maybe we shouldn't make it.

CHILDS
(beat)
If you're worried about anything, let's take that blood test of yours.

MAC READY
If we've got any surprises for each other -- we shouldn't be in any condition to do anything about it.
(beat)
You play chess?

CONTINUED

251 CONTINUED - 2 251

They regard each other for a moment. Childs painfully sits down across from MacReady.

CHILDS
I guess I'll be learning.

MacReady grins and hands the bottle to Childs. Childs smiles back and takes a healthy swig.

252 EXT. COMPOUND - NIGHT 252

The fires smolder on. Bright embers dance in the blackness -- pushed by the soughing wind.

FADE OUT

THE END